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A

VINDICATION

OF THE

HINDOOS:

PART THE SECOND,

IN REPLY TO THE

OBSERVATIONS

OF

THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER;

OF

MR. FULLER,

SECRETARY TO THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY;

AND OF HIS

ANONYMOUS FRIEND;

WITH SOME

REMARKS ON A SERMON

Preached at Oxford,

By the Rev. Dr. BARROW,

On the expediency of introducing Christianity among the Natives of India.

By a Bengal Officer.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY
BLACK, PARRY, AND KINGSBURY, LEADENHALL-STREET,
AND JOHN RODWELL, 344, STRAND.
1808.

INDIAN INSTITUTE
OXFORD

ERRATA.

Page 6, Line 16, after *But* place *if.*
6, 21, after *Europe* place ,
37, 20, for *objection* read *exception.*
47, 9, after *the* insert *upper.*
49, 13, for *for* read *white,*
— 21, for *of the* read *of their*
55, 14, after *ourselves* dele ? and for *I* read *if.*
72, 6, for *to given* read *give.*
77, 10, for *muster* read *master.*
124, 15, for *Je vis* read *Je vis.*
131, 13, for *Santra* read *Tantra*
136, 6, for *spirit* read *spirits.*
— 10, for *universel* read *universal.*
— 20, for *her Son* read *his Son.*
202, 17, for *Als* read *also.*

INTRODUCTION.

"O grant me, Heaven! the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes."

AS it would be difficult, perhaps, to write a book against which no objection could be found, it will not excite surprise, that the "Vindication of the Hindoos," should have shared the common fate, and that it should have furnished matter either for the cavils of criticism, or for the ostentatious display of literary investigation.

In the simplicity, however, of my heart, I had imagined that a plain statement of facts, blended with such obvious reflections as arose directly from the subject,

would have presented little scope either for serious criticism, or for any material objections founded on rational, candid, and consistent grounds. The result, however, has proved that my judgment has fallen short of my zeal in the cause which I had undertaken to defend.

I ought, perhaps, to have foreseen, that to enter the lists against established prejudices, was to war against the odds; that people who have already embraced opinions, however fallacious their source, unwillingly yield to any innovations which tend to implicate either their judgment or their credulity. I ought, perhaps, to have known, that there are some zealous votaries of Christianity, who view the extended map of religion through the confined vista of partial tenets; who, thus limited in their views, and attached to local prejudices, vainly imagine all moral fitness, and all religious excellence, to have exclusively arranged themselves under the banners of Christianity; and "that neither truth, justice, honour, gratitude, or charity, are

to be found pure" beyond the sphere of its influence; and who thence take occasion to vilify, with equal justice and discrimination, the whole population of an extensive empire, which Heaven hath not yet favoured with the gospel doctrine of redemption.

Had I been blessed with such lights, and had I consulted Prudence, she would, perhaps, have dictated the necessity of more mature consideration, ere I launched my frail bark into that tempestuous sea of opposition which is now unhappily raised against it by the adverse winds of Christian discontent.

Prudence would have done more. She would have whispered in my ear, " beware of *sectaries*—you are on the unamiable side of the question—you will not have fair play—you must not pretend to reason —they will quit argument, and assail you with faith—say nothing in praise of mere morality—you know Bishop Horsley declaimed against it, as destructive of vital

religion — beware, therefore, lest they charge you with infidelity. However moral or correct the Hindoos, do not compare them with Europeans—it will make them angry; but should you hint at superiority, your opponents will be quite outrageous, and you need expect no mercy." 'What! though it accord with consistency and truth!' "It matters not—you will not be believed; spare these virtues, therefore, to the Reviewers—they may have occasion for them; and a little sustenance will go a great way when one is famishing. What have the Hindoos ever done for you, that you should thus sacrifice your peace and time at the shrine of indignant sectaries? Consult then your own interest, and leave the Hindoos to their fate. If you embrace not this, my wholesome counsel, they will overwhelm you with one unanswerable argument, borrowed from the regular clergy;* they will tell you, that the higher you paint the moral virtues of the Hindoos, the

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* See sermon preached at Oxford, November 29, 1807, by the Rev. Edward Nares, M. A.

more worthy are they of salvation through the gospel. This truth you cannot consistently deny; let me, therefore, advise you to throw down your inefficient weapons of inexpediency and impracticability, to retire from the contest, and to be for ever silent."

Your advice, *Prudentia*, is excellent, but not altogether in season; our fortunes are embarked, and "on such a full sea are we now afloat, that we must take the current as it serves, or lose our ventures."*

But if, as our antagonists predict,
"Defeat and ruin" on our voyage wait,
Take thou the rudder, let the watch be strict,
Nor, Palinurus† like, sleep in the streight;
For though the fates stood perch'd upon the mast,
Exertion is our duty here below;
Bravely contending, if we fall at last,
We greatly fall before no vulgar foe.
Then, as the critic gale impels along,
Let's swan-like, cheer them with a parting song.

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* Fuller's pamphlet, page 126.

† The Pilot of Æneas's ship, who falling asleep at the helm, fell into the Sicilian sea and was drowned.

This song, gentle reader, must be in plain prose; and I lament that the burden of it must be the vindication of myself and my small work from the aspersions cast upon both by " the Christian Observer," by Mr. Fuller, Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society, and by his anonymous friend.

The leading charges against me seem to be—that I give a preference to the Hindoo Religion, and that I treat Christianity with disrespect.

Far be from me so foul a calumny!—far be from me the impious notion of entertaining even a thought against the purity, or excellence of Christianity! But I have suggested that the religion of Brahma has done more for the lower orders of the Hindoos than Christianity seems to have done for the corresponding classes in Europe. I should have hoped it would be seen that I aimed not at the religion, but at some of its unworthy professors, who scandalize it by their practice, in which I

think them infinitely inferior to the Hindoos. However this sentiment may give offence, by the imputation of invidious comparison, truth and justice compel me to declare that experience and observation, so far as my judgment enables me to decide, concur in establishing in my breast a conviction of its correctness. When we shall have obviated this objection among ourselves, we may with a better grace, and greater prospect of success, submit our code to the consideration of the natives of India. But if their manners be more correct than those of the objects of my reprehension, I see no just cause for depriving their religion of the merit of so salutary an effect. Perhaps, with inferior means, it had a better soil to work on than is submitted to the Christian dispensation in the stern vigour of European character: and that dispensation would, thence, have the more merit in the happy effects of an operation contending with greater difficulties. No man will question the purity of the spring, however tinctured with adventitious impurity in the remote channels of its course.

The nearer the spring, the purer the stream; and here, accordingly, the man of education is more likely to imbibe to the manifest benefit of public manners; he is less a bigot, it is true; but his mind is more enlightened, and his morality more improved: he is more practised in correctness; and manners thus lend their aid to establish the principles of his creed. Not so with the rustic multitude, who manifest the bigotry of religion without its divine inspiration; they have less a sense of moral fitness than the man of education and enlarged principles; and they too frequently evince, that a man may be very religious, according to their notions, without being very moral. To read any other book on a Sunday than the Bible, or to sing any thing but a psalm, they consider as very sinful; which opinion is founded on a good principle, when sanctioned by sincerity and countenanced by good works; and yet, perhaps, a violation of morality or social order, sends these very people the next day before a magistrate.

Most readily do I admit that if a revolution is ever to be effected in the present sentiments of the Hindoos, no means are so likely to be effectual as those afforded by Christianity; and, certainly, the circulation of our Scriptures among them in their own language, through the medium of booksellers, seems the least objectionable mode that can be devised for obtaining this great end. Give to those who seek, without inviting to the purchase. Voluntarily then, from choice and from conviction, if they *seek* the Gospel blessings of redemption, let us receive them with open arms. But the vintage is not yet ripe; the season is not yet come for a profitable harvest; the recent agitations in India have cast a blight upon the crop; hence our labour and our care would now equally be fruitless.

The argument seems therefore precisely in that predicament which the Rev. Dr. Barrow considers as hostile to our hopes. In his excellent sermon, preached by special appointment, before the University of

Oxford in November last, he thus judiciously observes*—

"But however important or indispensable may be the duty of endeavouring to extend to others the revelation which we have ourselves received, it can be incumbent on us to make the attempt only where there is a rational prospect of success. To undertake to convert every part of the heathen world, every independent nation with which we happen to have any connection, and every savage tribe that may fall in our way; this were a rash and visionary project, which would expose us to certain failure, and to merited ridicule and contempt."

Whether that "rational prospect of success" be now absolutely before us, must be decided by a candid review of the facts before the public, and by a due consideration of the state of the Indian mind under

* Page 5.

the pressure of existing circumstances. What those facts may want in force we will endeavour to supply by argument, and I know not how this can better be effected than in the very words of Dr. Barrow, in the continuation of his sermon.

In enumerating the difficulties which oppose our success in recommending our religion to the inhabitants of Asia, he says*—" To this must be added, what seems universally admitted, that whoever, amongst the Hindoos, departs from the faith and worship of his ancestors, is punished with the loss of cast; with the degradation of himself and his posterity from their rank in society; and with total exclusion from any intercourse or connection with his former conntrymen and friends. The timid mind of a native of Hindostan must be strongly impressed with the truth and value of our religion, before he can be expected to embrace it on terms like these;

* Page 16.

terms which might be allowed, without disgrace, to shake the firmness of the most undaunted spirit. Sacrifices of greater difficulty and importance have not been required since the Redeemer's first appearance upon earth, from any who wished to take up their cross and follow him."

Subsequently, in stating the pecuniary resources necessary towards promoting the conversion of the Hindoos, Dr. Barrow adds,*—

"If, however, all these resources, and all others that can be devised, are believed to be inadequate to the object in view; if it be not in our power to pursue such measures as are deemed the most likely to ensure success, it will be prudent to desist immediately from the attempt. Our scriptures themselves have condemned the folly of him who should begin to build without counting the cost, and not be able to finish."

Page 23.

These arguments clearly evince, that Dr. Barrow's view of the subject is formed on a more extended and liberal scale than that of Dr. Buchanan; and that he is not an advocate for the "solemn and imperious duty" of propagating our religion, unconnected with considerations of policy, prudence, and expediency.

It is, however, much to be regretted, that so enlightened a man as Dr. Barrow should have suffered his mind to be, in some degree, influenced by common prejudices hastily adopted, and ushered into public notice by many of our countrymen abroad, who, in speaking of the Hindoos, rashly hazard opinions unsupported by facts, and inconsistent with veracity.

"To the people at large," says Dr. Barrow,* "their own sacred volumes are wholly inaccessible; by them the books are forbidden to be read, and the language

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Page 18.

in which they are composed is no longer intelligible. They are compelled to receive, as the articles of their faith, not what the vedas really contain, but what their priests think proper to tell them."

On the facts in this passage I shall take the liberty of offering a few remarks, commencing with that which charges the brahmins with a falsification of their scriptures.

This charge is, indeed, of a very serious nature; and if brahmins could be guilty of such a perversion of sentiment, their cause would not, for a moment, be worthy the consideration of any man of common candour or consistency. But what proof is there of this charge?—or what likelihood of the fact? Of the many thousand brahmins who daily read and expound the scriptures to the people throughout India, would no exposition of the text be at any time found to swerve from consistency and truth? When two or three millions* of

* See Asiatic Researches, v. 6. p. 312.

people annually assemble at the vernal festival at Hurduar, what facility for detection, if imposition were intended, when, for ten successive days, half the time, perhaps, is occupied in expounding to the multitude the pages of their sacred volumes!

What communion in infamy—what consistency in delusion—what conformity in the fabricated tale of imposition—and what matchless effrontery of deception, must such a host of brahmins necessarily evince, to contrive, without detection, mutually to elicit a like exposition of the text, for the unworthy purpose of advancing their own interests!—That, in the hearing of numbers who understand the sacred language they thus read—that, seated before the revered altars of their gods, and in the awful presence of that Being, who hears all and sees all, they should thus wantonly lose sight of every rational principle of common sense, of common honesty, prudence, and discretion, seems a degree of mental imbecility and moral

turpitude, too monstrous for rational conception. Such an aggravated assemblage of folly, of impudence, and of baseness, I trust, is not to be found in the brahmin character, nor yet in human nature. In the words of the apostle, therefore, I would ask the reverend divine, " why dost thou so judge thy brother?" It is not, indeed, charitable; for, indeed, it is not true.

Having said that the brahmins would constantly be liable to detection, because so many of their auditors are conversant with the sacred language, it seems necessary to offer some elucidation of this position, as it opposes the assertion, that " the language in which the vedas are composed is no longer intelligible."

Now, if we had no other proof than the passage here before us, I conceive the merits of the question might rest wholly on this ground: for, were the language no longer intelligible, the prohibition to read it would, obviously, be inconsistent. This very prohibition therefore furnishes a proof

no way equivocal, that the language is intelligible, and that it has ever been understood by many people ineligible by the law to the expounding of the sacred volume to the multitude. Were they ignorant of the language, the prohibition would be superfluous. These people, so ineligible, are individuals of the inferior classes, many of whom we know to understand the Sancrit language. Sir William Jones himself was attended by such; for in the second volume of the Asiatic Researches, we find the following passage, in his discourse on the chronology of the Hindoos.* "But Rama Lochan, my own teacher, who, though not a brahmin, is an excellent scholar, and a very sensible and unprejudiced man," &c. And since, under particular circumstances, there is always some objection to a general rule, we accordingly find Menu himself, in his code of laws, thus providing against emergency:†

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* Page 124. † Page 48.

"In case of necessity, a student is required to learn the veda from one who is not a brahmin, and as long as that instruction continues, to honour his instructor with obsequious assiduity."

The Hindoos, thus instructed, are generally of the mixed classes, and often of the tribe of scribes, or chief accountants of the country. They are in general better informed than the common class of brahmins, who are not pundits. For a brahmin, though he may speak Sanscrit, is not a pundit, unless he has gone through a course of sacred learning. Of that class I have had two or three in my own family who spoke Sanscrit.

That the Sanscrit language, therefore, "is no longer intelligible," is certainly a gross error, and how it came to be entertained must be matter of astonishment. Such a notion could primarily have proceeded only from ignorance, inattention, or interested and unworthy misrepresentation; for, I will venture to say, that

there is scarce a temple in Hindostan, where it is not daily either perused in their books, or conversed in by the brahmins.

Often have I been present at lectures in their temples, and at their festivals, when the brahmin, perusing the sacred volume, expounded every passage as he proceeded, in the common language of his auditors.

On every occasion, in their temples, or other holy convocations, where I have attended, the mutual conversation of the pundits has invariably been in Sanscrit; and of this I have seen a hundred instances in various parts of India.

If the gross multitude are deprived of immediate access to the vedas, they are made amends by the various commentaries, and by other expositions of those books in the common language of the country,* accessible to every native who

* See Appendix A.

can read. In absolute essentials then what is it that they lose by the inhibition?

The seclusion of the vedas from vulgar inspection, must, doubtless, have been ordained to create in the public mind a greater reverence for the sacred repository of their faith, which the brahmins themselves universally regard with such extreme devotion and respect that, on certain days, and on stated occasions, they dare not even peruse the theological chapters; as may be seen at large in the fourth chapter of the Institutes of Menu. This consideration, therefore, should induce us to believe, that an exalted reverence for the veda, and not a desire of "affecting mystery or concealment," is the chief motive that actuates the brahmins on this occasion.

"They already guard with less vigilance," says Dr. Barrow,* "the treasures

* Sermon page 19.

of Sanscrit literature; and many of them have relaxed their hereditary jealousy of the scholars of Europe."

This is very true; because they have at length discovered, that no idle curiosity, but a rational thirst of knowledge, has induced our desire of exploring those treasures; and what they once withheld from us, under the influence of a contrary persuasion, they equally denied, and still deny to many of their own people, and of their own order, as the following extracts from Menu* will evince.

"Where virtue, and wealth sufficient to secure it, are not found, or diligent attention, at least, proportioned to the holiness of the subject, in that soil divine instruction must not be sown; it would perish, like fine seed in a barren land.

"A teacher of the veda should rather die with his learning, than sow it in sterile

* Page 31.

soil, even though he be in grievous distress for subsistence.

"Sacred learning having approached a brahmin, said to him—I am thy precious gem; preserve me with care; deliver me not to a scorner.

"But communicate me, as to a vigilant depository of thy gem, to that student whom thou shalt know to be pure, to have subdued his passions, to perform the duties of his order."

In a like sense, I presume, must be understood that injunction of our Saviour, in St. Matthew:

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."

Dr. Barrow further assures us, that "the prevalence of Christianity would essentially weaken that influence by which the brahmins originally obtained, and have

hitherto preserved their opulence and authority; by which they enslave the minds of their countrymen, and confine to their own tribe whatever honours or emoluments the church or the state has to bestow."*

Assuredly, these sentiments are but ill warranted by a due consideration of the subject. Is Dr. Barrow then ignorant that the brahmins, so far from having the power he ascribes to them, are entirely dependent for subsistence on the bounty of the state, or on donations voluntarily granted by the liberality of individuals? They have neither tithes nor great benefices, like our clergy, for their support; but only certain portions of free lands; and their opulence, in general, I believe to be very limited, for many hundreds of mendicant brahmins may be met with throughout the country. Could this be the case if they had "honours and emoluments" to bestow? Their influence, I

* Sermon Page 16.

acknowledge, is very great on the public mind. But as to any assumption of authority, or any power of securing honours or emoluments, either spiritual or temporal, it is neither so in practice, nor yet authorized in theory, by their book of laws. What Menu principally says on the subject I shall exhibit to the reader's view*.

"Let the king make sacrifices accompanied with gifts of many different kinds; and, for the full discharge of his duty, let him give the brahmins both legal enjoyments and moderate wealth.

"A king, even though dying with want, must not receive any tax from a brahmin *learned in the vedas;* nor suffer such a brahmin, residing in his territories, to be afflicted with hunger.

"The king having ascertained his knowledge of scripture, and good morals,

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* See Page 169.

must allow him a suitable maintenance, and protect him on all sides, as a father protects his son."

These are the passages that more directly bear on the point in question, in which the great power or authority of the Brahmins seem not very manifest. Many important privileges undoubtedly they enjoy beyond the common subject; they cannot legally be put to death for any crime, but may suffer the most ignominious degradation and banishment from the kingdom. This evinces that they did not altogether spare themselves, in enacting the code of laws, as the following extracts will further confirm*.

" Neither a father, nor a preceptor, nor a friend, nor a mother, nor a wife, nor a son, nor a domestic priest, must be left unpunished by the King, if they adhere not, with firmness, to their duty.

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* Menu, See Page 232.

"The fine of a sudra for theft, shall be eight fold; that of a vaisya, sixteen fold; that of a chatrya, two and thirty fold; that of a brahmin, four and sixty fold; or a hundred fold complete; or even twice four and sixty fold; each of them knowing the nature of his offence."

Here we see that the punishment rises in proportion to the rank of the offender, the crime being less excusable where the inducement to commit it, from the presumed circumstances, or relative dignity of the parties, is less founded on necessity, less consistent with honour, and, thence, necessarily manifesting greater baseness in the culprit. Thus also in offences "where another man of lower birth would be fined one pana, the king shall be fined a thousand*."

In enumerating the several classes in India to whom our religion is likely to be acceptable, Mr. Barrow observes†,—

* Menu, page 232. † Sermon, page 19.

" Nor will it be less acceptable to such of those invested with official and temporal power, as are weary and disgusted with the restraints imposed upon the indulgence of their passions and the exercise of their authority, by the influence and artifice of the priesthood."

As I may possibly be mistaken in my sense of this passage, I shall therefore decline saying all that occurs to me on the occasion. But I cannot help observing, that, if " the influence and artifice of the priesthood" are never worse directed than in imposing upon princes a restraint against " the indulgence of the passions, and the exercise of their authority," I hope never to witness the extinction of a principle operating so salutary an effect.

But what is this restraint which Mr. Barrow thus arraigns? Is it not the established law of the land? and whether that restraint was originally imposed by brahmins, or by barons, seems a matter of little importance. It is the Magna Charta

of the state; in the adjustment of which, the brahmins, with a degree of forbearance and self denial, which stands a solitary instance, perhaps, in the history of the world, for ever excluded their own class from all just claims on the sovereignty, and gratuitously conferred it on an inferior tribe. Brahmins, however, may have ambition for the exercise of temporal power, like the successors of St. Peter; and we sometimes, accordingly, see brahmins at the head of states, to the exclusion of the military class. This restraint then is not "a discretion of the church," but an established principle of law. It is the province of the brahmins to expound this law; but they cannot alter it at their discretion, consistently with the customs and the practice of their ancestors, or with the dictates of their sastras, which form their rule of faith. According to Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws*, "Whenever any doubt arises in the magistrate (the king) upon any

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* Preface, page 116.

circumstance, he shall apply for a solution thereof to those brahmins, (his counsellors) who, coinciding in sentiments, shall give him an answer conformable to the shaster."

The brahmins have doubtless great influence, but certainly no power, either independent of the law, or where not vested with authority by the sanction of the prince. Were any innovation to be made, as tending to improvement in the customs of society, it must, I judge, originate with the brahmins, generally, by an appellate jurisdiction, and by a mutual concert of all the colleges. And where could such a power more properly be placed, than with the elders of the nation—men of learning, of wisdom, of virtue, and discretion, to whom the prince himself must have recourse for his guidance in the discharge of those duties connected with his exalted station and executive responsibility? Whence, pray, have arisen the codes of moral and social ordinances that regulate society, if not from the wisdom of enlightened ecclesiastics. In temporalities, the whole

weight of brahmin authority, resting on the basis of the law, is committed to the hand of power, to strengthen with its influence every energy of the state.

Of that power the brahmins themselves thus speak in the code of Menu*—

"A king, even though a child, must not be treated lightly, from an idea that he is a mere mortal: no, he is a powerful divinity who appears in a human shape."

He is thus an object of veneration even to the brahmins, though he is of the military, or second order of the four great classes. How powerfully must the pious Hindoo be urged to loyalty and obedience when he considers a divinity immediately observant of his actions, in the person of the prince. The duty of a king is thus defined by Menu†.

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* See page 160. † Page 170.

"Never to recede from combat; to protect the people; and to honour the priests, is the highest duty of kings, and ensures their felicity."

Whatever may be the faults of brahmins, praise must be conceded to them for the liberality and feeling that dictated the following injunctions to the warrior in the day of battle*.

"Let no man engaged in combat smite his foe with sharp weapons concealed in wood; nor with arrows mischievously barbed; nor with poisoned arrows; nor with darts blazing with fire.

"Nor let him in a car, or on horseback, strike his enemy alighted on the ground; nor an effeminate man; nor one who sues for life with closed palms; nor one whose hair is loose, and obstructs his sight; nor one who says, I am thy captive.

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* Page 170.

" Nor one who sleeps; nor one who has lost his coat of mail; nor one who is naked; nor one who is disarmed; nor one who is a spectator, but not a combatant; nor one who is fighting with another man.

" Calling to mind the duty of honourable men, let him never slay one who has broken his weapon; nor one who is afflicted with private sorrow; nor one who has been grievously wounded; nor one who is terrified; nor one who turns his back."

The Reverend Dr. Barrow will, I hope, excuse the freedom I have used, in commenting on some of the positions which he has advanced in his sermon. Confidently reposing on the information of his guides, he has unwittingly given currency to error, by lending the sanction of his name to unworthy charges against the Hindoos. Venial, however, are the errors of Mr. Barrow, when we find them countenanced by writers who have actually been in India, and whose means of appreciating the subject have been enhanced by

a knowledge of the Indian languages, and the local advantage of daily converse with the natives of the country. Warped, however, by prejudices of education, their minds, leaning in the general direction of European sentiment, have lost sight of every consideration but that of a general conversion of the Hindoos to the doctrines of christianity; unmindful of the difficulties that seem to stand in the way of its attainment. Their first object is, therefore, as much as possible, to depreciate, in all its relations, the character of the Hindoos, in order to sanctify the means so strenuously urged for their improvement. We accordingly find a writer, who styles himself "a late Resident in Bengal," thus confidently telling the public,*—"But it is proper that the people of this country should be informed, that not one in ten thousand, amongst the Hindoos, knows more of the *Vedas*, *Bhagvat Geeta*, and *Menu*, than of the philosophy of *Confucius*.

* See "Considerations by a late Resident in Bengal," p. 70.

The doctrines contained in them are, to the bulk of the Hindoos, Esoteric, which the profane vulgar must not presume to penetrate; and they are, generally speaking, as little known to the followers of Brahma, as the Bible and New Testament were to the inhabitants of this island, before they were translated into the vernacular tongue for common use."

This gentleman, I think, goes a little too far; and, I trust, that my humble researches, in the present work, will tend to shew that his information is not altogether correct. I may, perhaps, embrace another opportunity of taking further notice of his pamphlet.

REMARKS

ON THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVER,

FOR FEBRUARY, 1808.

"In every work regard the writer's end,
"Since none can compass more than they intend."

THE Editors of "the Christian Observer" for February, have done me the honour to notice my "Vindication of the Hindoos" in a manner that would appear to stamp on it an importance far exceeding my humble sense of its estimation; for I scarcely deemed it of sufficient consequence to merit half what has been said against it. As reviewers, they have freely availed themselves of the privilege of their station,

and have, in an enviable style of impressive criticism, fairly impeached its merits at the bar of public justice—to that tribunal, therefore, I am necessarily constrained to repair, in the hope of liberating my cause from the undue pressure of strictures, conveyed in language calculated to make the worse appear the better reason. Unable, however, as I am to follow them in the exalted path of disquisition which they have so eminently traced out, I must content myself humbly to proceed, like the tortoise in the fable, with a slow but steady pace; and, possibly, the reader may find that, like the too confident hare, they have slumbered in the race.

Without further ceremony, therefore, I shall proceed to remark upon such parts of their "Review" as bear most obnoxiously upon the subject under discussion. But, before I enter upon this task, I must beg of them to exercise their candour in believing, that the more prominent parts in the first pages of the "Introduction to

this pamphlet, have no reference to their conduct, on this occasion, in the discharge of their public duty. Having rendered them this justice, they will suffer me to assume the privilege of commenting with the same freedom on their strictures, which they have exercised in their " Review of the Vindication of the Hindoos."

" Our valiant officer,"* they say, " is hardy enough to provoke discussion on the injunctions delivered in the Hindoo Scriptures with regard to women. Some of these are doubtless unexceptionable. But what is the spirit of them all taken in combination, we may judge from the following unfortunate concession, which has, inadvertently as it should seem, escaped from our author in the latter part of his book—"

" We may therefore venture to conclude, that the Hindoo female, though free from the appearance of restraint, is con-

* C. O. page 5.

siderably more a slave than the Mahomedan; the restraint upon the latter being merely personal, whereas the Hindoo is influenced by a tyranny of a more imperious nature; a restraint upon the mind."

I am not sorry that I am thus fairly at issue with the reviewers on a most important point; but, instead of regretting this "unfortunate concession" as they term it, there is not one tittle of that concession which, on due consideration, I find the smallest reason to retract.

What is the sum of this concession?—that the customs and manners, and the policy of the Hindoos, have engendered a principle, unremittingly operating on the mind, to guard it against lapses in decorum and morality; and, if so salutary an effect be really produced by this "restraint upon the mind" I should hope that, in the eye of the reviewers, it would rather find favour than condemnation.

What is this restraint?—the imperious law of public opinion—the fear of shame —more dreadful, in the eye of moral fitness, than death itself; and, however novel may be the idea, I believe it to be a better safeguard to virtue, in every part of the world, than either law or religion. Dismiss but this salutary principle from its influence on public manners, and you unhinge society.

" Unfortunate concession!" —Really, reader, I am somewhat surprised that they should be either so inadvertent, or so short sighted, if one be not a necessary consequence of the other: and yet they arraign my " deficiency in all large and general views", when I confined myself to particulars and common facts. I must repeat it; this principle for which I contend, is, in my humble opinion, superior to all laws, divine or human; and operates with infinite benefit to society, not only in India, but in every other country that possesses the smallest claim to civilization. And where its influence is most extensive, there

is ever the least occasion for appeals to law to confine individuals to the path of rectitude.

> "Where all their ways are unconfin'd,
> "And where the padlock's on the mind."

This principle may be stronger in India than in Europe; and there may be greater necessity for its more active operation, where the ebullitions of desire, fanned to impetuosity by the fervid breezes of a burning clime, require the interposition of every restraint that prudence can devise, or propriety impose. Hence the necessity under which this regulated seclusion, among the Hindoos, appears to be indispensible to their quiet and happiness.

Condemn not, then, their law-giver, for those salutary restrictions which, in the eye of Europeans, seem to violate the principle of equal liberty and rights, so happily cherished in our more temperate clime. For, however Europeans in the East may lament that seclusion which thus debars them from all intercourse with the better

class of Hindoo females, and pettishly arraign the policy of its imposition, so hostile to their hopes, let them weigh well the matter, lay their hand upon their heart, and candidly declare whether Menu is not right.

In the next article, the Reviewers are very great, and would fain overwhelm me at once. They thus observe*—"He has visited innumerable temples, yet never witnessed any exhibition at their shrines that bore the appearance of indecency. In what singular sense does he understand the words indecency and immorality?—Has he never seen nor heard of the obscene representations in their temples?" Never! "Of the troops of prostitutes attached to the establishment of their pagodas?" Never! Never!

The reader will recollect that it is of "our faithful subjects of the Ganges," I have all along been discoursing—the peo-

* Page 12.

ple among whom I sojourned while in India—whom alone I have endeavoured to vindicate, and whom alone I know, having never visited the peninsula, where, I believe, the manners of the people are less pure than those of their brethren on the Ganges. I have answered the above questions in the negative, because I have never seen in any of the temples in those countries, watered by the Jumma or the Ganges, either any obscene representations, or any prostitutes attached to the establishments of the pagodas. No such establishments exist in Bengal; at least, I have never seen nor heard of any, but have always seen the minstrelsy confined to male performers.

This distinction must have escaped the notice of the Reviewers, and the distinction is very material in this question. For many a weary mile, extensive plain, and rugged mountain intervene between the people of Hindostan and those of the peninsula, and the people are, at least, as different as the Russians and English, and

almost as far asunder from each other. Now, as I do not like to be under any particular obligations to the Reviewers, I restore them the benefit of those "large and general views" of the subject they have taken on this occasion. Whenever, therefore, they may have occasion to resume the subject, let them bear in mind, that the Ganges is a great way from the peninsula—that the argument in one case may be totally inapplicable in the other—that there are no "troops of prostitutes attached to the establishments of their pagodas," nor any "obscene representations in their temples"—that the people of Calcutta are very different from those of Behar, Benares, Oude, and the Raajpoot provinces—and these, again, from those of Orissa, Madras, and Bombay—and that the whole differ widely from the Mahrattas.

> "Without all these at once before their eyes,
> Cavil they may, but never criticise."

I shall, for the present, defer speaking of the Ithyphallic symbols, but in the mean

time I must beg leave to ask, how far it appears consistent with those "large and general views" which the Reviewers seem to expect, that a president of a court of justice at Calcutta, Bombay, or London, should, in one sweeping clause, condemn the whole population of a country, from a bare consideration of the annual calendar, or of the recorded trials in the courts —thus "judging the many by the rascal few?" Who would not smile at an Indian traveller, who should attempt to furnish his countrymen with correct ideas of Europe from a bare inspection of the manners of the people at Rome, Paris, London, or Petersburgh? The French or the Swiss, I dare say, would be very indignant at the classification of their virtues with those of the convicts at the Old Bailey. But, if our criminal register exhibits trials and punishmeuts more numerous than those of any nation on the continent, we may console ourselves with the reflection that great vices are, perhaps, inseparable from great virtues. We estimate not the ore in the mine by the dross that envelopes it. If

we are thus somewhat vulnerable ourselves, we should learn to judge of others with more charity.

As the Reviewers merit my thanks for furnishing an opportunity of thus vindicating myself and the Hindoos, I will endeavour to throw on the subject as much light as possible, as well for public information, as for the justification of the cause.

Be it known then that those who are usually employed in the service of the military in Hindostan are, generally, natives of Behar, and other western provinces, or their relatives, born in Bengal. Whether they are better men than the native Bengalese I will not pretend to say, for I shall propose nothing that I cannot substantiate from experience. I have had servants, occasionally, from all the provinces, and frequently forty or fifty, as well Mahomedans as Hindoos, in my private pay. The domestic servants consist of a few Mahomedans, who attend at table; and of the Hindoo bearers, who

carry the palankeen, and our private stores on the line of march. These latter are usually from Behar, and it is to them we generally entrust our property, as stated in the "Vindication." It might naturally be supposed, that men so confidentially situated, must have a liberal allowance for their support, proportioned in some degree, to the importance of their trust, in order to guard them against the temptation of violating their fidelity. Of this the reader may judge, when I assure him that the wages of the common bearers are at most but four rupees, or ten shillings, a month; and those of the head man five rupees. One gentleman in fifty, perhaps, may give six rupees, or more, according to his rank or inclination. I never gave more than six, and that only for the last two years. For this small sum they furnish themselves with food, raiment, and bedding; and they sleep in all seasons on the ground. The Mahomedan servants get higher pay, in consideration of additional garments, that they may always appear clean dressed at table, and their dress is,

besides, more expensive than that of the Hindoos.

From the number of these people constantly in our pay, and from the increased population necessarily attendant on Indian armies, which, even when we march, is calculated at full five to one for every fighting man, the crouds of people in our cantonments must be very great. In the provinces west of Benares, where I have for many years been stationed, the civil and criminal justice of our camps was always exercised by the commanding officer, till the late cession to Lord Wellesley paved the way for the introduction of civil judges, collectors, and commercial agents, in common with the lower provinces. In those situations therefore, military men were often "called on to settle disputes and hear causes,"* and to keep in due order the vast population of their stations: and, however unimportant those causes

* C. O. page 14.

might be, as excluding revenue and territorial questions beyond certain limits of cantonments, still, the natural collisions of a vast compressed population, must, on "large and liberal views," be expected to furnish sufficient occasions, in any country, for the exercise of judicial power. That those occasions were less frequent with us than they would have been in any other country, I sincerely believe; and the cause of this infrequency, I as conscientiously believe, to be fairly attributable to the general mildness, and correct demeanour of the people under our authority.

I have heard that the people of Bengal Proper are inclined to litigation, nor am I disposed to question it. They are men of active, lively, and ingenious minds; and may be as litigious, for ought I know, as any petty attorney of our courts. I wish I could as safely say, that this disposition did not meet too much encouragement from some less worthy members among the inferior officers of our courts of justice in Calcutta. The same may fairly

be conjectured of the practice of the other presidencies—But, I would not hold up the mixed population at the capital of each presidency, as a fair standard for a general appreciation of Hindoo manners; especially since the admission of foreigners has given a new, and I fear, no improved bias to those manners. This sentiment may give offence to more than the Reviewers; and I am sorry that their conduct thus compels me to urge it; but, if participation lessen grief, it may also operate on this occasion; for we share the odium, particularly at Bombay, with the Portugueze, the Arabs, the Jews, and common Moormen.

Of the Parsees I may not speak, being unacquainted with their merits. And as what I know of the Greeks and Armenians of Bengal, is considerably in their favour, the like may be presumed of the brethren at the other presidencies. But without presuming to derogate from the merits or testimony of Governor Holwell, or Sir James Macintosh, in the limited sphere

of their observations,* I must be permitted to say, that it falls to the lot of persons in my situation to see more into the manners of the people at large, at least of the lower orders in India, than any great man whatsoever. The distance is too great between those of exalted civil stations and the mass of the people to admit of the requisite information, which would be best attained by descending from their dignity to mix among the multitude. This objection, from the very nature of our relative situations, must necessarily less exist among the military; and perhaps, from a peculiarity of circumstances, unnecessary here to indicate, it has fallen more to my lot to associate with the natives of India than the generality of my brother officers; a circumstance that must furnish a decided advantage in estimating their character. And though I have not the honour of being known to the Reviewers, nor can charge myself with any

*C. O. 16 and 18.

inordinate ambition on that score, yet, many of my friends, who will be at no great loss to identify the author, will do me the justice to agree that I am warranted in the above assertion. If I have, therefore, exceeded the limits of public expectation in praise of the Hindoos, it has arisen from a full conviction of the justice of their claims; and yet, the Reviewers pretend that I must have been "either a very careless, or a very fortunate master of a family in India."* Now, I am not sure that this reasoning is quite logical; for I have been both careless and fortunate—careless, because I was confident; and fortunate, in never having had that confidence abused. Whether I should have been equally fortunate in this country, on a like degree of carelessness, the Reviewers may decide. I have already asked the question, and shall urge it no further.

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* C. O. page 18.

As it is not my wish to deprive any man of his due meed of praise, I, therefore, cheerfully concede to Sir James Macintosh the full measure of the following compliment, which the Reviewers, on "large and general views," have paid to that gentleman, whose "opinion of the rooted depravity of the natives" of India, they have faithfully recorded.

"Although the personal experience of the learned judge was *confined to Bombay;* yet, as the reader will observe in the article of character, he uniformly identifies the inhabitants of that settlement with those of *India at large;* and Sir James Macintosh is not a man whom we can suspect of random assertions, or inconsiderate conclusions."*

The Reviewers have declaimed against certain parts of brahmin ritual, and have

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* C. O. page 19.

exhibited Sir William Jones's general sentence against those rites; but, it would equally have become them and Sir Wm. Jones to have considered whether what "Plutarch has said of the Egyptians, that they had inserted nothing into their worship without a reason,"* might not, in this case, have equally applied to the ceremonies of the brahmins. We know that it does generally apply; and we know that they cannot even spit out, in certain directions, consistently with their notions of the relative stations of those divinities whom, as radiations of the Divine Essence, they are called on to revere. The Godhead is thus, in some shape or other, constantly brought before them; which must operate as a salutary guide in the general regulation of their conduct; and if, in such trifles, they believe the Deity to be observant of their actions, how great must be this consideration in matters of higher moment? The general result must

* C. O. page 13.

thus be favourable to their morals. But were individuals once taught to exercise their judgment regarding the expediency or propriety of any rite or ceremony established by the church, the line of duty, thus violated, might progressively lead from scepticism to apostacy, till liberated, at length, from all sense of responsibility, the only rule of human action would be the passions of the multitude.

I wish I could as easily satisfy myself that the case of "light oaths and pious perjury," however originally well intended, was not liable to abuse from the folly of the weak, or the designs of the vicious; but to a system of laws so many thousand years old, some indulgence should be granted, if its improvements have not kept pace with the changing tide of public manners. If the menaced punishments of the law detailed in my pamphlet, be ineffectual in guarding against individual transgression, we can only lament the inefficiency of all human institutions to confine the conduct of society to the un-

erring path of rectitude. If the aberrations of the Hindoos, even on this single point, could more effectually be restrained by Christianity, who would not wish for its establishment among them? But is their faith in their own scripture less strong than that of the most pious Christian in the gospel?—Or are they less sensible of the menaced consequences of transgression, exhibited in their divine code, than they would be on a perusal of our scriptures?—And if not, will christianity redress the evil?—Has it redressed it among ourselves? If it be true, that "the actual conduct of elections in general, or too often, exhibits nothing but a scene of riot, drunkenness, debauchery, prostitution, and perjury? Witness all the statutes that have been made in the course of the present century, to correct these disorders, and to no purpose."*

These are unpleasant truths; and sorry

* See Plowden's Constitution of the United Kingdoms, page 186.

am I to have occasion to urge them, not merely as "a set off," to the charges against the Hindoos, but to evince, that, in the present state of universal morals, "true perfection none must hope to find in all this world."

The Reviewers have done me great honour in contrasting my declarations with the summary opinion of Sir William Jones; but, as far as I have ventured to go, I think his opinion in my favour. I am, however, unambitious of "breaking a lance," with his respected shade, or with any great man, who may be desirous of entering on this subject; but I shall not be deterred, by "the whistling of a name," from endeavouring to vindicate any facts I may have stated, or any opinions I may have advanced, how far soever they may be found to bear upon the sentiments of others; and as the Reviewers endeavour to crush me, by throwing* Achilles on my shoulders,

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C. O. Page 9.

they must suffer me to remind them, that this hero was not invulnerable.

They, also, introduce Lord Teignmouth, to give me a *coup de grace;* but, if I have said that the natives are mild, modest, and obsequious, his lordship, as they state, confesses, that, "as a general position, liable to particular exceptions, he is not authorized to dispute it."* But, they charge me with not dropping the remotest hint, "that the mildness generally attributed to them, is not unfrequently broken by the most frightful paroxisms of ferocity." I do not dispute this.—Lord Teignmouth has stated it. The facts have long been before the public; and no man will venture to dispute authority so respectable. But the Reviewers seem to forget that it is Mr. Buchanan alone, I have been writing against; and if all his strictures have been on the side of the prosecution, may I not, in my humble way, be heard on the other side. This is conformable to English

* Page 16.

law, and consistent with general equity; nor am I without sanguine hopes of a favorable result from the candour of the public.

The Reviewers are justly indignant at the imposition attempted by Captain Wilford's Pundit, in regard to the Sanscrit documents, respecting Egypt and the British Isles. This Pundit, we see, must have been a man of uncommon abilities; and we see no reason to acquit him of criminality, in having made interpolations in the text, to meet the wishes of Captain Wilford, in the object of his research. But I am not altogether satisfied as to the criminality of the ten Brahmins brought forward by the Pundit to prove the fidelity of the extracts. Mr. Wilford thus acquaints us:*—"When he, (the Pundit) found that I was resolved to make a collation of the manuscript, he began to adulterate and disfigure his own manuscript, mine, *and the manuscripts of the college*; by erasing the original name of the coun-

* Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. page 251.

try, and putting that of Egypt, or of Swetam, in its place. Being afterwards sensible of the danger of his detection, he was induced to attempt the most daring *falsification of the originals;* in order, if possible, to extricate himself. When discovered, he flew into the most violent paroxisms of rage; calling down the vengeance of heaven, with the most horrid and tremendous imprecations, upon himself and children, if the *extracts* were not true. He brought ten Brahmins, not only as compurgators, but also to swear by what was most sacred in their religion, to the genuineness of those *extracts.* After giving them a severe reprimand for this prostitution of the sacred character, I, of course, refused to allow them to proceed."

Now, I think it is to be regretted that Captain Wilford did not allow them to proceed, that it might be seen how far they would venture to go in support of the accused Pundit. The sum of the account seems to be this,—they were brought

by the Pundit before Captain Wilford, to prove that the *extracts* in his manuscript, were faithful copies of the *records in the college;* and to this, they might safely have sworn; since it is admitted, that the Pundit himself, who, as a member of the college, had access to the records, had previously altered the manuscripts of the college, to suit his unworthy purpose. Had the Brahmins gone no further than this, where lies the criminality? Had they known of the alteration of the college records, which does not appear, then indeed they would be criminal, if, contrary to their better knowledge, they had vouched for their being genuine. If the Pundit, however, imposed on Captain Wilford, he might equally have imposed on the ten Brahmins, by exhibiting *only the college records.* But his disclosing the secret of his imposition to ten men, would not have been a very likely way to have obtained their sanction to a falsity, when that falsity could ultimately have been detected by collating the college records with other copies of the manuscript,

which, if not found at Benares, might be procured at other colleges. Is it then likely that they would have gone one step farther than seemed warranted by those records? To this point, therefore, I think Captain Wilford should have brought them; that either the culpability of the Pundit might have been established to their satisfaction, as it already had been to his own; or that their own infamy might have been made manifest, had they sworn the records to be genuine. And here, let me remind the reader, that it was to the "genuineness of the *extracts*," they were to have sworn, and not to that of the *records*.

That Captain Wilford, under the strong impression of an excusable indignation, should have overlooked this consideration, is, perhaps, not to be wondered at; but that it should hitherto have escaped the accuracy of all the commentators, seems a little surprising. I trust, however, that the suggestion here submitted to public consideration, will have due weight in the

scale of candour, by tending to vindicate the Brahmins from those aspersions, apparently originating in misconception, which have unhappily been recorded against them, on this occasion, in the pages of the Asiatic Researches.

The interpolations by the Pundit, granting them to have been made, no man will venture to excuse; and I wish this instance had stood single in the annals of literary infamy. But the conduct of Lauder towards Milton unhappily proves that streams of kindred vice flow in all all countries, whether blessed with the light of the gospel dispensation, or immersed in the darkness of paganism. And in this instance, it seems manifest that Lauder rises, in the scale of infamy, far beyond his rival of the Ganges. My readers, I trust, will excuse me, if I here state the substance of the charge against him.*

* Todd's Milton, vol. i. page 265.

"He, unfortunate man, scrupled not to disgrace the considerable learning which he possessed, and to forfeit all pretensions to probity, by an audacious endeavour to prove that Milton was the worst and greatest of all plagiaries. He corrupted the text of those poets whom he produced as evidences against the originality of Milton, by interpolating several verses, either of his own fabrication, or from the latin translation of Paradise Lost, by William Hog." Detected, however, by Bishop Douglas, he confessed the imposition; subsequently recanted;* and, "with an inconsistence equalled only by his impudence, renewed his attack upon the author of the Paradise Lost."

Thus we see, on one side, interpolations made from pure malignity of heart, for the purpose of injuring the fame of an individual high in the public estimation. On the other, literary fabrications chiefly in-

* Ibid. page 173.

troduced for the purpose of gratifying European vanity, by tracing, in Sanscrit Records, an early account of the British Isles. On the relative transgressions of the parties, let impartiality decide.

Nor must we here neglect suggesting, that, when the Pundit so solemnly invocated the vengeance of heaven if the *extracts* were not genuine, he probably meant no more than that they were relatively so, in reference to the *college records*. If this be true, the enormity of his tremendous invocation is thus destroyed, though it will not acquit him of the interpolations.

The Reviewers, not relishing my eulogium on the Hindoos, sarcastically remark,*—"It certainly is a little curious that a man so formed as our author seems to be, to appreciate the society of those pure beings, should quit a state of such

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* C. O. p. 15.

innocence and joy, to enter into the scenes of sin and trouble, with which a christian country must salute his eye. Is he sanguine enough to hope our conversion to the perfect doctrine of the Vedas?"

If, after an absence of twenty-seven years from one's native country, a man should be desirous of visiting his relatives and friends, and of renewing those relations of amity and kindness established in early life, few, I believe, except the Christian Observer, would consider it at all "curious." They, perhaps, have been more happily circumstanced, and have never experienced the pangs that follow "separation from kindred and friends;" or the delights that by temporary privation, enhance the sum of domestic happiness, by invigorating the renewed considerations of personal regard. If, however, they have really experienced these kindred emotions of cordial sensibility, "it certainly is a little curious" that they should evince so little candour in appreciating

the feelings of an expatriated Bengal officer.

If, after a residence of twenty-seven years in an Indian climate, hostile to the constitution and habits of European adventurers, and under the pressure, perhaps, of "diseases attended with anguish, and pangs of innumerable sorts," the unhappy sufferer, limited, perhaps, in circumstances, and thence involuntarily yielding to the necessity of a protracted sojournment, on a theatre furnishing his sole means of subsistence—If thus situated, he should at length adopt the last resource of suffering Europeans in the East, and return to Europe for the restoration of his health, "it certainly is a little curious," that the Christian Observer, otherwise so accurate in discernment, should want the sagacity to develope so imperious a necessity.

That a Bengal officer receiving from the liberality of the Honourable Company, near two thousand a year in the com-

mand of a battalion, "should quit a state of such innocence and joy" and emolument, and on a reduced allowance of twenty shillings a day, "enter into the scenes of sin and trouble (and God knows they are abundant) with which a Christian country must salute his eye," must, in the opinion of the Christian Observer, be very "curious" indeed. But what will the Christian Observer say, when informed that this Bengal officer, for the idle purpose of re-establishing his health, has chosen to remain on furlough for the last fifteen months, without any pay at all, when he might have returned to India, and have revelled in emolument, in "innocence and joy?"

I anticipate, on this occasion, from the Christian Observer, a sense of returning candour amounting, at least, to a confession that "it certainly is a little curious."

But, perhaps, it would be in vain to expect candour where justice is not conceded. The Reviewers have disputed my

facts, and I must rise in their vindication. But in the mean time, I must beg of them to dismiss all apprehensions of my attempting their "conversion to the perfect doctrines of the vedas;" though, if the *perfect* doctrines of the vedas suit not their taste, I cannot much envy their notion of christianity. One virtue at least, they seem to have overlooked—a virtue that might have cast a shade over some lapses of correctness which I have to lay to their charge. But perhaps they are not "of Paul" and though the poet, echoing the apostle, tells them, that

"All mankind's concern is charity,"

they appear to think it would be thrown away, upon a subject so unworthy in their eyes, as the humble vindicator of the Hindoos.

"Our author* (say the Reviewers) has

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* Page 16.

not omitted to enlarge on the fidelity and honesty of native servants; though we have no doubt that the accounts on this subject are considerably exaggerated, yet it may be admitted, that in India, the attachment of servants to masters, where it really exists, possesses a degree of warmth rarely, if ever, witnessed in Europe."

I thank them for thus questioning the fidelity of my statement, and it would doubtless have gratified their readers to have suggested some probable cause for this alleged exaggeration:—" Perhaps this Bengal officer is about to return to India, and may hope to find some of his quondam servants placed near the person of some man in power, who might, through their recommendation, serve their old master, who had thus stood forward to vindicate them among his countrymen. Some motive of equal interest he doubtless must have thus confidently to enter the lists on a question of such moment;

for his own dear Menu* tells us, that, "Eager desire to act has its root in expectation of some advantage."

That I have such a motive, I candidly avow, and that I feel great interest therein, I will not deny. If the reader wishes to be acquainted with this motive, he will find it in the 13th page of the Introduction to the "Vindication." My sole motive is there detailed, and needs no amplification. If the Reviewers think my statement "considerably exaggerated," there are a hundred Bengal servants of the Honourable Company now in town, who are competent to resolve their doubts.

"Our author† (the Reviewers add) will undoubtedly take refuge in his commonplace invectives, when we venture to mention, in connection with this topic, the crimes of theft, lying, and perjury.

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* Menu, p. 17. † Page 17.

Yet he must permit us to say, that his unmeasured denial of the frequency of these and other vices, among the Hindoos, is a decisive proof either that he has wilfully suppressed what he could not palliate, or that he is utterly ignorant of what he professes to know."

" This is a cruel stroke,"* and " every word of this quotation must strike a dagger into the assertions" of the Reverend Mr. Buchanan, whose positive (not unmeasured) denial of the virtues of the Hindoos, in opposition to testimonies admitted by the Reviewers themselves, must place him precisely in that predicament, which the Reviewers have assigned to the Vindicator of the Hindoos.

If I have erred, in not having pourtrayed all the shades of Hindoo character, which I never professed to do, I shall be

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* C. O. p. 12 and 18.

supposed to have erred in good company—that of a christian divine, the Reverend Claudius Buchanan; who, having exhibited all the dark shades of the picture, left me only the care of introducing a little light, to given more spirit to the piece.

If I have erred, however, in not touching upon vices which the Hindoos may have in common with the rest of mankind, it was because that, in so doing, it would have been impossible to have avoided comparisons unpleasant to the English reader. I therefore studiously avoided it; especially as the public had already heard Governor Holwell, Sir James Macintosh, and others. I, therefore, traced only an "ex parte" path, consistently with the leading example of the Reverend Mr. Buchanan. But now, that the Reviewers have challenged me to the field, I trust I shall, in candour, be excused, for whatever I may hereafter consistently add, to what I have already urged on a point so very ungracious.

If the Reviewers will more attentively peruse the "Vindication," they will observe, that "the excellence of the moral system of the Hindoos," is the chief ground of my argument. "They have the law;" and if they will not act up to it, is the system therefore to blame? If Sir William Jones was disappointed in not finding the Hindoos "all perfect," he must have set out with an expectation which the common sense of mankind will consider as unreasonable. In what region of the earth are people found immaculate? And if not under the auspices of the Christian religion, why then under those of Brahma? Much has been said of theft, lying, and perjury, among the Hindoos, as if the notoriety of these vices, on the great theatre of the world, were now first discovered. But we need not go to India to learn that theft, lying, perjury, and swindling, bribery and corruption, rapes, murders, robberies, and other enormities, exist in the world; and that too, among a people professing christianity. Our own calender, unhappily, bears de-

deplorable testimony to the fact. When we have corrected these vices among ourselves, as I have already said, we may with a better grace offer instruction to the Hindoos. This may, however, be considered a weak argument. The Jews, for whom the law was made, would scarcely listen to the apostles; but when the latter resorted to the Gentiles, these came readily to feast. It may prove so among the Hindoos. Their obsequiousness will pave the way; and their improved morality will bear the palm of correctness, vainly offered to the acceptance of the sinful among ourselves. To this point, therefore, I sincerely wish they may be brought; and if they will first act up to the spirit of their own law, the transition will be easier to the more simple and sublime tenets of our code.

In reference to page 92, of the Vindication, which being too long for insertion, I here omit, the Reviewers thus ob-

serve,*—" Now we will not stop to explain away this history. We will neither express our wonder that the upper servants, who are generally Musselmen, should, in this instance, as we are given to understand, have been of the lower class of Hindoos; nor repeat that the servants of officers are notoriously (almost proverbially) superior to others, because they are under the restraint of martial law; nor, finally, presume to suggest that, at any rate, in a remote situation up the country, there might be little inducement to steal, because there would be little probability of finding a market for the stolen property, of which the greater part would be useless to the natives."

I here really feel at a loss to understand the Reviewers—" that the upper servants, who are generally Musselmen, should be of the lower classes of Hindoos." If it be meant as either wit or humour, I can

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* C. O. p. 17.

assure them that they soar far beyond the capacity of the Bengal officer, and have the joke entirely to themselves. If intended as a critique on the text, I deny its application, and challenge them to the proof.

In order to lessen the merit of my eulogium on Hindoo servants, the Reviewers tell us, "that the servants of officers are notoriously superior to others."* I am glad to hear this, even for the first time; and, if it be really so, I wish for the sake of my brother officers, that it may continue. But they will give me leave, I trust, without offence, to doubt the fact; because I am of opinion, that the comforts experienced in the families of the civil servants in India, are so comparatively superior, that they would always get men of more respectability and consequent correctness about them, than fall to our lot in the military line; besides the relative situation

* Page 17.

of those gentlemen as judges, magistrates, collectors, or commercial agents, must render it a matter of great importance to Indian families to have their brothers, sons, or other relatives, so near the seat of influence, of power, and of consequent protection. To rise at two or three o'clock in the morning, and march fifteen or twenty miles before breakfast; to attend the muster three or four times a day, on parades, guards, or pickets (to say nothing of the dangers and fatigues incident to actual service) must have many charms indeed, to give it a preference, in the eye of any Indian servant whatever, to the ease, quiet, and comfort, he must necessarily experience in the service of a civilian. The more needy, therefore, alone, would probably join our standard; and I need not insist with the reader, that the more needy, in any country, are not those from whom a superior degree of correctness can reasonably be expected.

At civil stations, "in remote situations up the country, there might be little in-

ducement to steal, because there would be little probability of finding a market for the stolen property;"* and to this may be added the consideration, that, in limited societies men are usually more correct than in places of great comparative population, where the constant collision of the great and various multitude, must not only multiply, but add refinement to transgression, and render temptation so abundant.—On common principles of reasoning, therefore the servants of the civil officers ought generally to be more correct than those of the military.

But I must beg leave to acquaint the Reviewers, that I have never been in such a remote situation as they have fancied; but always where there have been many regiments of infantry, cavalry, or artillery, European as well as native. In such places, what facility for disposing of stolen property—liquors, plate, &c.!—

* C. O. page 18.

Money is out of the question. They would keep that to themselves, disappear whenever they pleased, and be no more heard of;—but our knowledge of their general honesty furnishes a confidence in its security.

All this, in the eye of the Reviewers, must "certainly be a little curious," but it is neverthelesss true; and the little history which they would "explain away," I could verify upon oath.

I believe these gentlemen are angry at my placing the Hindoos in so favorable a point of view, as it might seem to obviate the necessity of any great improvement, in many respects, from their conversion to Christianity; but, however angry it may make them, I must add one flower more to the Indian chaplet of correctness, by solemnly assuring them and the public, upon the word and honour of an officer, that, during my long residence in India, I never once had occasion to bring a native of that country to public trial, or to punish-

ment, though while I was a subaltern officer I had charge of an active department for many years, which gave me the sole command of more than three hundred men; and have since commanded a battalion of sepoys, a thousand rank and file *

As a further proof of the general correctness of the natives of India, I shall take the liberty of stating a circumstance that happened several years ago at Lucnow.

An English gentleman at the court of the late Nabob, Asoph ul Dowla, one day expatiating in a large company on the honesty and fidelity of the natives of the country, proposed, in support of his opinion, to send to the bazar, or market-place, for the first cossid, or

* The late Lord Lake has been heard to say, that it was easier to keep four or five battalions of Sepoys in order, than one European regiment.

courier, that should be met with, and to entrust him with a considerable sum of money to the military station of Cawnpoor, distant about fifty miles. The project was agreed to, and another gentleman of the party sent his servant for a cossid. The man came, took charge of the money which was counted out before him, departed on his journey, and in due time, returned with a receipt for the amount.

The temptation was here strong; and had the man carried off the cash, detection, in the wilderness of Indian population, was next to an impossibility.

I trust the reader will not be displeased at my relating another instance of this nature, which happened at Benares in the year 1802.

A native merchant, or banker of that town, having occasion to send to Poona, for an emerald and diamond necklace, valued at two thousand five hundred

pounds, which had formerly been sent for sale to his constituent at that place, employed a single cossid to undertake a journey of nearly a thousand miles across the country, and bring back the necklace. The cossid, at the same time, received commissions from other merchants, to the amount of five hundred pounds. The man accordingly set out, reached Poona, obtained the necklace, and other property, and after a perilous and fatiguing journey, and passing through the camps of several contending chiefs, at length, after six months absence, safely returned to Benares in the faithful discharge of his trust. And what was his reward, for this uncommon proof of his fidelity, and the labour of his journey?—Not more, I am assured, at the very utmost, than ten pounds.

Connected with this circumstance, stands an instance of Hindoo gratitude, that well deserves to be commemorated.

This necklace it seems had belonged to a

Brahmin, named Nund Loll, who had often been employed as a broker by Mr. John Neave, when resident at Benares. This man fell sick, and feeling the pressure of approaching dissolution, made his will, and bequeathed all his property to his patron Mr. Neave. The officiating priest and other Brahmins, expostulated; they called to his recollection the friends of his own cast, his relatives, and particularly a nephew, then residing in a distant province;—all was in vain;—he had made up his mind;—Mr. Neave was every thing to him;—his friend, his patron, his maa-baap (father and mother.) He knew Mr. Neave's mind—his disposition;—that he would do what was proper;—and that his nephew and other relatives would not be forsaken by his friend. In this sentiment he died, and the property was soon after faithfully surrendered to Mr. Neave.

It was on this man's death that the cossid was dispatched for the necklace; and on its being duly delivered to Mr. Neave, that gentleman, with a liberality

that does him honour, presented it to the nephew of the deceased Brahmin, and distributed five or six hundred pounds among the relatives of the family, reserving to himself about four thousand pounds.

I have also heard that when Mr. John Shore, now Lord Teignmouth, had first resigned the service in Bengal, and was about to return home, his banian one day came, and throwing himself at his feet, begged his acceptance of a bag of money, which he laid before him, as an humble testimony of gratitude for numerous favours, and that unremitting kindness ever manifested towards him by his master.

I trust the reader will excuse the introduction of these anecdotes, as I deem them of importance towards the support of my "Vindication of the Hindoos."

The Christian Observer asks, "who can be so hopelessly ignorant as not to know,

that, from the time the first knee was bent to a shapeless trunk or stone, the language of our author has been the common jargon of idolaters?"—That is, "while the Hindoos prostrate themselves before idols, they adore the unity of the god-head."*

I can, however, point out to the Reviewers two of the coadjutors, who appear deficient in that knowledge which they here seem to expect from me. One of these is Mr. Fuller, secretary to a Christian Society; who says that, "What the Hindoos sacrifice they sacrifice to dæmons, and not unto God." The other is Mr. Fuller's friend; who calls the Hindoo Deity, "a stupid opossum." But, "after all that has been written on this point, both in past ages and the present, will the reader believe,†" that the Reviewers still seem ignorant of the exalted ideas entertained of the Deity by the Hindoos? While they reverence statues, they con-

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*C. O. p. 11. †C. O. p. 11.

sider the inferior beings whom they represent, only as agents of the Supreme, as mere guardians, as inspectors of human actions; but the Hindoos know that their agency is limited; that, at the appointed time, they must vanish into air; and, that God alone is permanent. Did the Greeks reason thus when they put Socrates to death for disparaging their Gods? Socrates would not have experienced such treatment from the Hindoos. On the contrary, they would have granted him, that these gods were only transitory beings; but, perhaps, they would have added, as a Hindoo once said to me at Canouge, "I acknowledge the Unity of God, and that he should be contemplated, in abstract meditation, with a mind undiverted by worldly considerations: But, as we cannot be all yogees, and as the discharge of our respective avocations is necessary to existence, the goodness of the Deity has therefore permitted us, at stated times, to form in our minds a conception of his essence; to fix the wandering attention by some corres-

ponding visible object, and to adore him in that quality; and having discharged this duty, to proceed in the performance of those we owe unto society."

"Do you believe me yet?—or shall I call antiquity from the old schools" of Asia to testify that there is scarce a single bearer, who carries the palankeen in India, who has not as exalted a notion of God as ever Socrates entertained? He daily hears, and is taught from his infancy to believe of the supreme, that he is—

Ne Roop Ung
Ne Rekh Ung
Ne Jeev Ung
Ne Sheev Ung.

The meaning of which is, that—

By naught with colour, shape, or life pourtrayed,
Nor yet by Sheev, is the Supreme displayed.

When the Hindoos consider that the divine spark of etherial essence which enlightens our mortal frame, is but a ray from this grand

fountain of light—a celestial fire—the grand creative principle of life—BRAHM—which equally pervades all nature; which—

"Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
"Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees."

(And this is the positive language of the pundits, in my hearing, to the people.) When they think thus, and the end so happily sanctifies the means, shall we utterly condemn that "mythology which circulated in popular stories, embodied in countless festivals, enshrined in a thousand pagodas and innumerable idols, perpetually lives in the eye of the people, operates upon their senses, and forms their character?"*

The reader knows, that, in the foreground of their mythology, stand Brahma, Vishnu, and Seeva, or the three great attributes of creation, preservation and destruction. These are considered by the Reverend Mr. Maurice, as "only corrup-

* C. O. p. 10.

tions of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."* And he remarks, "that if the Indians had originally intended to deify merely three attributes of God, they would, surely, have fixed on the three principal attributes of the Deity, which are goodness, wisdom, and power, rather than his creative, his preserving, and his destroying faculty. Of these, there was surely but little occasion to make three Gods, since he who possesses the power to create, must of necessity, also possess the power to preserve and to destroy."

Without presuming to draw any invidious parallel between the Hindoo Trinity and Mr. Maurice's proposed emendation, let us represent the pious Hindoo adoring the first creative energy of the Divinity under the title of Brahma, in whose agency is implied the wisdom of arrange-

* Indian Antiquities, v. 4, 749.

ment; while, in Vishnou, he regards preserving grace, ever active to sustain the righteous; and in Maha Deva, the power of punishing sinful mortals, as well as rebellious demons, constantly prone, as types of evil, to plunge the world into disorder, and to oppose that active principle of unceasing renovation, committed also to the care of this avenging minister of the Deity. The pious Christian adores the power of God in the creation, his wisdom in the arrangement, and his goodness in the preservation. Here, a fourth attribute might be introduced, exhibiting the terrors of his anger, as "a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children;" in which view he is to be dreaded, and his wrath to be duly deprecated. But, after all, is it not contending for a distinction without a difference, since, in fact, it is the wisdom, goodness, and power, of the divinity, that are thus typified by the Brahmins?

When we contemplate the Deity in the wonderful mechanism of the human frame,

in the splendid exhibition of the spheres, and in that incomparable arrangement which pervades all nature in her numerous radiations: When we recognize his provident care; his goodness, that obviates every want; his bounty, that bestows fertility on the earth, its fruits for our sustenance, its rivers, its mountains, and its forests, teeming with treasures subservient to our use: When each resplendent attribute is thus successively presented to the view, do we not directly adore him, in each respective attribute, accordingly? In what, therefore, does our system essentially differ from that of the well-meaning Hindoo, whose ingenious mind has formed an endless series of divine attributes, that claim his reverence, his gratitude, and his love?

"In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw."

These attributes he has embodied, he has personified; they form his character; they confirm his faith; they exalt his reverence for that Being, so far surpassing

these subordinate energies, whom both duty and inclination lead him to revere as emissaries from heaven, sent to protect and cheer the heart of man, and kindly to aid him in his labours.

" Then looking up, from sire to sire, explored,
" One great first Father, and that first adored."

When the reader recollects my having said, in the Vindication, that, " wherever I look around me, in the vast region of Hindoo mythology, I discover piety in the garb of allegory; and I see morality, at every turn, blended with every tale."—When this mythology, circulated in a thousand popular stories, of vice repressed, of zeal approved, of injustice punished, or of piety rewarded.—When the ingenious tale developes itself to the understanding, and the heart, expanding to the dignity of congenial sentiment, melts responsive into sensibility, so, as often, involuntarily, to induce the sympathetic tear of kindred feeling.—When the obvious moral, in all the simplicity of truth and nature, bursts

on the enraptured sense, unaided by commentary, unelicited by remark.—When, lastly, this faithful exposition of the text is exhibited to the reader's view, he will scarcely be of opinion, with the "Christian Observer," that, in attempting to appreciate the merits of the Hindoo system of religion, I was insensible to the moral effect of its mythology; or, that the Reviewers are justified in saying, that, "this immense field, the author, with the usual justice of his *coup d'œil*, has on this occasion over-looked."*

To a point, so obviously in my favor, it was not my interest to be inattentive.

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* C. O. Page 11.

REMARKS.

ON

MR. FULLER's PAMPHLET.

" 'Tis not the wholesome sharp morality,
" Or modest anger of a satyric spirit,
" That hurts or wounds;
" But the sinister application of the Interpreter;
" Who will distort and strain
" The general scope and purpose of an author,
" To his particular and private spleen."

SO much has been said, in the preceding pages, on the subject of the " Vindication of the Hindoos," that little remains to be noticed in the intemperate productions of Mr. Fuller and his anonymous friend. Driven to the last refuge

of a vindictive spirit, when argument begins to fail, they have charged me with irreligion. But, thank God, the reign of terror is at an end; when gloom-eyed bigotry, usurping the judgment seat of true religion, scared justice from her throne, and, with the infernal scourge of persecution, impiously—

> " Dealt damnation round the land,
> " On each she judged a foe.

A candid and cool reasoning public will be slow to adopt the sentiments of these gentlemen, who, aiming to crush me under the terrors of their anathema, sap the foundation of their cause by their manifest want of temper, and by a marked illiberality, that—

> " Must needs mistake an author into vice."

Had they brought discredit on my work, by just and reasonable argument, and by disproval of my facts, in fair assumption of a critic's right, I should si-

lently have submitted, and should have kissed the rod whene'er it smarted; but thus to "degrade fair satire to a scold;" and say I am unchristian-like—a very atheist, is a proceeding as little consistent with the meekness of Christianity, as with its charity. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is a sacred injunction which they seem to have lost sight of, in the paroxysm of their anger; yet they might well have learned a lesson of consistency from "the Christian Observer," who, with all his faults, has, in his strictures on the "Vindication" generally preserved the dignity of the Christian and the critic; and they must allow, that to have comparative merit is some praise, however small the sum of the account.

"But Appius reddens at each word you speak."

"But stop: we know not who this witness is: we cannot admit of anonymous testimony; an anonymous writer has no business to obtrude himself as a witness, but merely as a reasoner. I must take leave, therefore, to set down all that he

has related from his own knowledge, as nugatory."*

I must therefore presume, that it would have better pleased Mr. Fuller, if I had exhibited from Sonnerat, or Du Perron, a page or two of impure rites, which I had never seen, and which do not prevail in Northern India; or if I had condemned the fidelity of the Hindoos against my better knowledge,

> "With mean complacence, thus betray my trust,
> "And be so civil, as to prove unjust."

But this sacrifice, Mr. Fuller cannot reasonably expect from me, after I have so fully committed to public record my sentiments on Hindoo honesty, and on the decency of their worship.

As a proof of Mr. Fuller's accuracy in estimating the Hindoo notion of the Divine Spirit, take the following specimen from his pamphlet.

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* F. P. 72 and 77.

"Our author would persuade us, that the Divine Spirit is the grand object of Hindoo adoration; but he omitted to tell us that the brahmins are above him; for that worlds and gods subsist by their oblations, and they can give being to new gods—they not only give them divinity, but elevate them above all that is called God, or that is worshipped."*

By the brahmins giving "being to new gods" must, I conceive, be understood the influence of their oblations, through the medium of Brahma, the sole agent in creation; from whose wisdom they are said to have directly sprung, and of whom they are considered as a type on earth. But neither Brahma, Vishnou, or Seeva, nor the whole assemblage of gods convey a due notion of the Divine Spirit, as may be seen in my pamphlet, where it is said, "But he must consider the Supreme Omnipotent Intelligence, as the sovereign

* Page 47.

Lord of them all, by whose energy alone they exist;"* and hence, at each *maha pralaya*, or universal destruction of all created form, they sink into the oblivious night of time, and

> " Like the baseless fabric of a vision
> Leave not a rack behind,"
> ——————" Till fire purge all things new
> Both heaven and earth, wherein the just might dwell."

Mr. Fuller has been rather severe on my friend Crishna; but he comes to the point when he observes,† that " whatever subordination there may be amongst these deities with respect to each other, they are all opposed to the true God. What claims can he have after those of Crishna are satisfied, who calls his the supreme nature which is superior to all things? Our author would wish him, no doubt, to be thought an attribute of the true God, or, as he calls him, the preserving power of the divinity. But this he cannot be, for

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* Page 27. † Page 52.

his character is immoral—he must therefore be a rival, taking place of the divinity."

Now, reader, that the Divine Spirit, assuming visibility, should manifest itself in the person of Crishna, or in any other form, Christians, I presume, should have no difficulty in conceiving, while they believe the living Christ to be God. It is Narrayan, therefore, the Divine Spirit, the self-existent God, that, in the Geeta, is represented in the person of Crishna conversing with his friend Arjoon. This may be seen at large in the Geeta, but the reader will perhaps not be displeased with a compressed illustration of the fact.

Arjoon having requested Crishna to shew him his divine countenance, the latter consents, observing—

"But as thou art unable to see with these thy natural eyes, I will give thee a

heavenly eye, with which behold my divine connection."*—as when

——————" to nobler sights
Michael, from Adam's eyes, the film remov'd."

" The mighty compound and divine being, Haree, having thus spoken, made evident unto Arjoon his supreme and heavenly form,—the Eternal God, whose countenance is turned on every side.

" The son of Pandoo then beheld within the body of the God of gods, standing together, the whole universe divided forth into its vast variety; he bowed down his head before the god, and thus addressed him—

" I behold, O God! within thy breast the dews† assembled, and every specific tribe of beings. I see Brahma, that deity, sitting on his lotus throne. I see

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* Page 90. † Deities.

thyself, on all sides, of infinite shape—a mass of glory, darting refulgent beams around—thou art the supreme being, incorruptible, worthy to be known.—Thou art the prime supporter of the universal orb—the never-failing and eternal guardian of religion—I see thee without beginning, without middle, and without end—the sun and moon thy eyes—thy mouth a flaming fire; and the whole universe shining with thy reflected glory."

"The invisible spirit,* says Mr. Fuller, to which their devotions are directed, according to this writer's own account, is Crishna; who is not God, but a deified creature that takes place of God; a demon, whose character, as drawn even in their own Sastras, is lewd and treacherous; we might know from these their records, even though an apostle had not told us, "that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God."

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* Page 51.

Here we must interpose the testimony of Sir William Jones, who, in the Asiatic Researches, thus speaks of Crishna.*

"This incarnate deity of Sanscrit romance, who was not less heroic than lovely, was cradled and educated among herdsmen, and passed his youth in playing with a party of milk maids A tyrant, at the time of his birth, ordered all new-born males to be slain, yet this wonderful babe was preserved. He saved multitudes partly by his arms, and partly by his miraculous powers—he raised the dead, by descending for that purpose to the lowest regions—he was the meekest and best tempered of beings—washed the feet of the brahmins, and preached very nobly indeed, and sublimely, but always in their favour—he was pure and chaste in reality, but exhibited an appearance of excessive libertinism—lastly, he was benevolent and tender, yet fomented and conducted a

* Vol. i. 261 and 273.

terrible war, a war against oppressors, at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his heavenly seat in Vaicont'ha."

In this picture, I think, we discern not the features of a demon.

Mr. Fuller has, indeed, made strange confusion in my Indian Hierarchy; jumbling together, most unceremoniously, brahmins, demons, gods, and demi-gods, and linking them in a *raas jattra*, or equinoctial dance, he has sent them tripping to the spheres shot from the pointed arrow of his wrath.

> "Inhuman Fuller, was it not a shame
> "To fright my gods, so harmless and so tame."

How far Mr. Fuller is a discerning, candid, and consistent reasoner, the reader may judge from the following statement.

I had said that, on the enlarged principles of moral reasoning, the Hindoo system little needs the meliorating hand

of Christian dispensation to render its votaries sufficiently correct and moral for all the useful purposes of civilized society, for, " we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully,"

On this passage, Mr. Fuller observes, that " to argue merely from what is useful to civilized society, is to argue as an atheist."*

But, have I argued *merely* from what is useful to civilized society, unconnected with considerations of their ultimate dependance on God, from whose mandate their moral ordinances, and the various regulations for their conduct, are religiously believed to have directly flowed? So believing in God, and so acting according to the law, if I have said that their system requires little improvement from Christianity, *where lies the atheism?* It may possibly be anti-christian, as excluding

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* Page 41.

gospel influence; but, assuredly, not *atheistical.*

How far their system is connected with salvation is another question, and one that I have not presumed to touch on. I dare not arraign the wisdom of God in not having bestowed on the Hindoos the lights of gospel redemption. This would be to

"Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod."

but if Mr. Fuller could be satisfied with a confession of faith from an anonymous writer to whom he will yield no credence, I would tell him, that I firmly believe that, through grace, all men may be saved, of whatsoever faith or country; and that, if moral conduct, and faith in the Almighty will not, in our opinion, ensure salvation out of the pale of Christianity, we thus pronounce a judgment on all the faithful who were ignorant of the Redeemer before the mission of the prophets.

In this view, then, I conclude, we should regard the question respecting the Hindoos; and, since we are neither prophets nor apostles, let us humbly leave to God to decide when, and on whom, he will bestow those further lights which our zeal would induce us to confer on the pagan world. Our Lord himself has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." The time of the Hindoos may not be yet arrived.

Mr. Fuller says that my "Vindication of the Hindoos" surpasses all that have gone before it. "Messrs. Twining and Scott Waring were desirous of being considered as Christians; but if this writer does not formally avow his infidelity, he takes so little care to disguise it, that no doubt can remain on the subject. After having ascribed the Protestant religion to reason rather than revelation, pretended that the immortality of the soul was first

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* Page 28.

revealed in Hindostan; questioned whether Christianity be at all necessary to the improvement of the Indian system of moral ordinances; preferred the heathen notion of transmigration to the Christian doctrine of future punishment; and framed a geeta of his own, in favour of purgatory. After all this, I say, and much more, he cannot with any consistency, pretend to be a Christian."

As the industrious bee is said to extract honey from every herb or flower, whether in its nature baneful or otherwise, so am I happy to receive instruction even from Mr. Fuller; and I accordingly, beg his acceptance of my thanks, for acquainting me that the Protestant religion is the offspring of revelation rather than of reason. If I have erred in ascribing it to reason, I must confess myself to have been misled by a passing tale, which ascribed this doctrine to the revelation of one Martin Luther; and as I could not find his name on the apostolic list, I concluded that this revelation was not the

great revelation, but one something like it, founded on reason. To reason, therefore, I ascribed it. Moreover, when I reflected that this doctrine of reason was "rejected by half of Europe,"* who, notwithstanding Martin's preaching, still pertinaciously adhered to transubstantiation in the sacrament, and other imputed errors, I then, indeed, dismissed all doubt, being fully satisfied that this little revelation could not be the great sastra of religion, common to all Christians. Some, to be sure, protested that it was, and some protested it was not; I, therefore, entered my protest, and called it the protesting, or the protestant doctrine; well knowing that the great and universal sastra is the Christian religion, against which there is no protesting, it being founded on the stable basis of faith; to whose temple all Christians equally bring the mite of their oblations. Whether protestant or papist they have

* See Vindication, p. 10.

equally one great faith; one great religion though the doctrines are various. But if the Roman catholics question the protestant discipline, as one of novel introduction, will Mr. Fuller say that the Roman catholics are not Christians? And if protestants reject papal doctrines which, under the successors of St. Peter, had long been held canonical throughout Europe, do they not attribute this rejection to the "maturity of reason," rather than to revelation?—And if so, how am I anti-christian, in having barely adverted to the fact?

Really, reader, I consider it a hardship that the necessity of discussing a point, in my opinion, so very obvious, should have been imposed upon me, by Mr. Fuller's want of candour in identifying my expression with the Christian religion at large, instead of the protestant doctrine. If, however, we should acquit him of want of candour, I apprehend it could only be at the expence of his discernment; and here, indeed, were I to blame him, I

should myself be wanting in that candour I would exact from him. No man is justly blameable for a defect of understanding; and if "so thick a drop serene hath quenched" his intellectual orb, as to have obscured his judgment on this occasion, 'tis a venial weakness incident to frail humanity, and seems rather calculated to excite our pity, than to merit our contempt.

Mr. Fuller will therefore choose, whether we shall ascribe this commentary to wilful mistake, or to woeful imbecility of critical discernment.

If I have "pretended that the immortality of the soul was first revealed in Hindostan," it is a pretence in which I consider myself warranted on very respectable authority, that of a learned clergyman of the Church of England, the Reverend Mr. Maurice, Assistant Librarian to the British Museum. In the 5th volume of the Indian Antiquities will be found that gentleman's illustration of

the subject of which I shall here exhibit a compressed statement, as in part already detailed in the pages of the Vindication.

* "The first voyage of Pythagoras in pursuit of knowledge, after the completion of his academical exercises at Samos, was to Sidon, his native place, where he was early initiated into all the mysterious rites and sciences of Phenicia; from Phenicia he travelled into Egypt, and there continued, during two and twenty years, to imbibe the stream of knowledge, at Heliopolis, at Memphis, and at Diospolis, or Thebes. He subsequently passed twelve years in Babylon, where "all the sublime arcana, inculcated in the ancient chaldaic oracles, attributed to the elder Zoroaster, were laid open to his view; and it appears that both the prophet Ezekiel, and the second Zoroaster, resided

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there at the same time. The former instructed him in the awful principles of the Hebrew religion; the latter made him acquainted with the doctrines of the two predominant principles in nature, good and evil, and unfolded to his astonished view all the stupendous mysteries of Mithra. Ultimately, he sought the distant but celebrated groves of the brachmans of India. By them he was probably instructed in the true system of the universe, which to this day is distinguished by his name. Among them he greatly enlarged the limits of his metaphysical knowledge; and from them he carried away the glorious doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which he first divulged in Greece, and the fanciful doctrine of the metempsychosis."

Here then, we see, that so late as the sixth century before Christ, the Egyptian and Phenician sages, the Chaldean and Persian magi, and the Hebrew prophets, were utter strangers to the doctrine of the soul's immortality; as it is not even

hinted at in the list of scientific acquirements made by Pythagoras among those people.*

To India then, as the true source of this glorious doctrine, let us turn, with becoming reverence, and pay due homage at the shrine of that profound genius which unfolded this great truth—And, divesting our minds of unworthy prejudices of education, ever hostile to improvement, let us contemplate with awe and with respect, that remote period, when this sublime tenet, blended with their manifold system of theology and science, irradiated the eastern hemisphere, and exhibited the pious Brahmins as the most enlightened of the human race.

Whether I have "framed a Geeta of my own in favour of purgatory" will be best known to those who may choose to converse with the brahmins on the sub-

* See Appendix B.

ject, and to our divines, to whom I leave the task of resolving all their doubts.

Mr. Fuller has asserted "that there never was an idea of the labours of the missionaries disturbing the confidence which the natives placed in the British government, till European adversaries suggested it."*

In order to controvert this assertion, I shall take the liberty of exhibiting a few extracts from Missionary Reports, cited in the third edition of Major Scott Waring's first pamphlet.

P. 57.—"Mr. Chamberlain, an English missionary writes, "last evening a number of brahmins and others, loaded Kangeree and me with abuse, and manifested the greatest enmity against the gospel that I have seen in this country."

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* Page 76.

P. 59.—" A whole village rose against three Hindoo converts."

P. 59.—" The enmity of the brahmins is increased, owing, as I suppose, to their feeling their cause in danger of falling." He adds, " Since the beginning of this year, I think, upwards of twenty thousand tracts have been distributed; the second edition of the New Testament remains yet to be dispersed."

P. 67.—" The mere appearance of an English missionary, in a bigoted city, would occasion the greatest alarm."

I shall dismiss this article by simply remarking that it was time for " European adversaries" as he calls them, to " suggest" attention to the subject, when such facts as these were introduced to public notice by the missionaries themselves.

As a proof of the Hindoo code being a system of priestcraft, Mr. Fuller, among

other passages, cites the following from Menu.

" Let not a king, though in the greatest distress for money, provoke brahmins to anger, by taking their property; for they, once enraged, could immediately, by sacrifices and imprecations, destroy him, with his troops, horses, elephants, and cars."

Suppose an Englishman to appropriate this sentiment; and, for the word " brahmin," to substitute clergy, let us see how it would, in substance, read.

" Let not a king, though in the greatest distress for money, provoke the clergy to anger, by taking their property, for they, once enraged, could destroy him," &c.

We have already beheaded one king and banished another for attempting independance of the law of religion. There should be a controlling power over the

despotism of princes—that power, in India, is religion; when that is once destroyed, anarchy and the reign of terror ensue. Look to France. In India, the exercise of that power would be manifested only by words and pious oblations. In England, as we have seen, the proceeding is somewhat more summary and effectual. I believe the system of the Brahmins will lose nothing by comparison with that of Europeans, even in this particular.

Mr. Fuller cites the following passage from Dr. Tennant—

* "It is curious to observe how the indifference, or rather the dislike, of some old settlers in India, is expressly against the system of their forefathers. It is compared with the Hindoo institutions, with an affectation of impartiality, while in the meantime, the latter system is extolled in its greatest puerilities and follies. Its

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* See p. 56.

grossest fables are always asserted to convey some hidden but sound lessons of wisdom. They inveigh against the disputes and differences of the western world, ascribing them solely to their religious dogmata. They palliate the most fanatical and the most painful of the Hindoo rites, and never fail in discovering some salutary influence which they shed upon society. Wrapt up in devout admiration of the beauty and sublimity of the Vedas, they affect to triumph in their supposed superiority over the simplicity of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. This affectation is the more ridiculous because it is indulged by those who pretend to great taste and profound knowledge of Sanscrit learning."

"If the Doctor's performance (adds Mr. Fuller) had not been written before that of the Bengal officer, we should almost have supposed he meant to draw his picture."

I do not think Mr. Fuller has much pro-

moted his cause by the introduction of this passage; for if the fables of the Hindoos convey "sound lessons of wisdom; if their rites shed "a salutary influence on society;" and if these notions are entertained by men of "great taste and profound knowledge of Sanscrit learning," the public will be apt to believe that there is really something in it; that a veil is thrown over this something by the writers against the Hindoos; and that this something must have had some influence on the mind of Sir William Jones, when he asserted, in a manner so unqualified, that, "We may assure ourselves, that neither Musselmen nor Hindoos will ever be converted by any mission from the Church of Rome, or from any other church."*

If the picture which Mr. Fuller thus assigns me, be not an exact portrait, I must confess that it exhibits some features of similitude; a family likeness in com-

* A. R. v. 1. p. 274.

mon with those men of taste, above-mentioned; men, who seem to have smoothed the asperities of early prejudices by the collisions of enlarged research, and by the wisdom of experience; and with whom to err, affords some consolation for the loss of Mr. Fuller's approbation.

If men of taste and learning commit such errors, let the public beware who they send out to convert the Hindoos. Men of science would be dangerous, but more especially the regular clergy; they might be captivated by the sastras, and turn renegado to the gospel. You boast, however, of two good exceptions, Mr. Carey and Dr. Tennant; every rule, perhaps, has exceptions. Send out, therefore, only such of the hard-working labourers of the vineyard, as may be in no danger of learning Sanscrit.

As I have, unhappily, no credit with Mr. Fuller for the fidelity of my statements, he suspects that the whole story respecting the Hindoo preacher, in page

54, of the "Vindication," is "a fabrication." I, however, consider myself warranted in having stated the fact, on the authority of a gentleman who was at Calcutta at the time the circumstance occurred; and I am of opinion that it was the more immediate cause of Sir George Barlow's injunction to the missionaries, neither to preach to the natives in public, nor suffer the native converts to preach: Not to distribute tracts abusing the Hindoos, nor suffer their people to distribute them.*

This injunction was given in the end of August, 1806; and thus corresponds, in point of time, with the statement in the "Vindication"

The first intimation I received of this prohibitory injunction, was from Major Scott's third pamphet, in which is tran-

* See Major Scott Waring's third Pamphlet p. 61.

scribed from the Vindication, the story of the Hindoo preacher. I mention this only with a view of obviating a possible conjecture, on the part of uncandid incredulity, that the story of the preacher was a fabrication from the mandate of Sir George Barlow to the missionaries.

I trust there are few, besides Mr. Fuller, against whom such a precaution would be necessary.

Urged by the claims of his anonymous friend, whom I shall now wait upon, I must for the present take leave of Mr. Fuller, assuring him, that—

"Je vis de ses discours frivoles.
"On sait fort bien que ses paroles,
"Ne sont pas articles de foi!"

REPLY

TO

Mr. Fuller's Anonymous Friend.

"Quel demón vous irrite, et vous porte á medire ?"

AFTER referring this gentleman to what has been already urged respecting the "Vindication of the Hindoos," in reply to "The Christian Observer," and others, I will cheerfully make him this acknowledgment, that I believe he has had access to many "Hindoo books, which probably I never saw;" and if he has profited by them to the extent that his statement would lead us to conclude, I

shall be happy to avail myself of his better knowledge, for the improvement of my own; confessing, at the same time, that my knowledge of vedas and sastras is very limited indeed. If I have, as he asserts, confounded these works with others that do not merit these appellations, I stand before an impartial tribunal that must decide between us. The public voice will be biassed only by the merits of the case.

This gentleman thus observes*—

"The Vindicator of the Hindoos, who styles himself a Bengal Officer, for proofs of the excellence of the Hindoo system, confines himself to the Institutes of Menu, which the reader should know were translated by Sir William Jones, and to the Heetopades and Bhagvat Geeta, translated by Mr. (now Dr.) Wilkins. These, the Vindicator is continually confounding with vedas and sastras, of which he appears to

* Mr. Fuller's Pamphlet, p. 82.

possess little knowledge. The Heetopades is only a book of ethics, of no divinely acknowledged authority among the Hindoos, but ranks with them as Lockman's Fables do among the Arabs, and as Æsop's Fables among the ancient Greeks and modern Europeans. It is a series of curiously concatenated apologues, intended to illustrate the four following subjects, 1. the acquisition of friends; 2. the breach of friendship; 3. war; and 4. peace."

"The Geeta is not pretended to be any part of their divinely inspired laws; it is only in its English dress that it can be considered at all as an independent work; and those who know its history better than this Bengal Officer appears to do, know that it forms only an episode in the great Sanscrit poem, entitled the Maha Bharat."

What is veda? and what is sastra?

The word veda I believe to be a general name for science: and there are four great vedas, the fountains of all knowledge.

Sastra, as Sir William Jones acquaints us, is "derived from a root, signifying to ordain, means generally an ordinance, and particularly a sacred ordinance."* Every veda, therefore, is a sastra. But in fact, any treatise, upon any art or science, is a sastra. Thus we have—

The Dherma Sastra, or Religious Code;
Neetee Sastra, a System of Ethics;
†Jeutish Sastra, relates to Astronomy;
Guj Sastra, relates to Elephants;
Nyaya Sastra, on Theology, Metaphysics, Logic, &c.
Silpa Sastra, on Mechanical Arts and Manufactures.

However lightly this gentleman may estimate the Geeta, it must, I presume, be connected with the Bhagavat, or Life

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* A. R. i. 353.

† The Indian scholar, I trust, will excuse my orthography of Indian words, in which I have sometimes sacrificed classic correctness at the shrine of vulgar pronunciation.

of Crishna, which is one of the eighteen sacred poorans.

The Maha Bharat, besides being professedly a history of the war between the Kuroos and Pandoos, seems, likewise, a more general record of Indian history; for we learn from Paulinus, that it contains an account of the nine incarnations of Vishnu,* with a circumstantial account of the heroine Sacontala;† and Captain Wilford acquaints us that it exhibits the history of Semiramis, or Sami-Rama-Devi.‡

These, I presume, can only be considered as episodes in the Mahabharat, in common with the Geeta which, I understand, belongs to the *Bhishma Purva* of that poem; and though it is not often found in its place, in the work itself, being

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* Page 337. † Page 374.

‡ A. R. v. 8, p. 256.

held too sacred to be inserted in every copy, yet a space is always left for it in the Mahabharat; and the *paging* shews that it belongs to it.

Vyasa is the reputed author of the *Mahabharat*; and to him also are ascribed the eighteen poorans, as we learn from Sir William Jones.* The eighteenth, Sir William adds, "is the *Bhagawata*, or life of Crishna," which must be posterior to the *Bharata*. That this Bhagawata should omit all notice of his actions in the Bharata, and consequently of the Geeta, would be very extraordinary indeed.

In the first volume of the Asiatic Researches, Sir William Jones, speaking of the Hindoos, says,—"Their Niti Sastra, or System of Ethics, is yet preserved; and the fables of Vishnu Serman, whom we ridiculously call Pilpay, are the most beautiful, if not the most ancient collec-

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* A. R. v. 1. p. 351. † Page 429.

tion of apologues in the world. They were first translated from the Sanscrit, in the sixth century, by order of *Anushirvan*, king of Persia; and are extant under various names, in more than twenty languages; but their original title is Hitopadesa, or Amicable Instructions."

"This work," as Mr. Wilkins says, "so replete with the maxims of an ancient people;"* maxims, as the author of the Heetopades himself, expressly states, "chiefly drawn and written from the *Santra* and *other Sastras*.†" This work, I say, might well merit the appellation of a Sastra, whose precepts it developes; and therefore I found myself equally warranted in citing its maxims in the Vindication, as if I had directly drawn them from the parent source. They are not the less ge-

* Heetopa: Dedication. † Heetopa: p. 3.

nuine for appearing in a transcript or a commentary.*

Have the Psalms inserted in our prayer books, less merit in those places than in the testament from whence they were taken?

The reader will now judge of the consistency of my antagonist.

If Mr. Fuller was uncivil to the gentle Crishna, as a shepherd god, his anonymous friend is not more respectful to the Supreme Deity of the Hindoos.

"Uhe egale fureur anime leurs esprits."

My assumption of their "exalted idea of God," seems to give him great offence. He quotes some passages from page 26, of the "Vindication," and then asks, †"Will

* Appendix, C. † F. p. 88.

any of our readers ever imagine that such descriptions as these can manifest a sublime idea of God? Is not the whole system mere Spinosism? The god here depicted is no other than universal nature; the mere assemblage of the molecular of all bodies in their various combinations. View this worthy deity! The divine, solar and igneous light, are his digestive heat; in his corporeal fluid, water may be contemplated; and in the terrene parts of his fabric, earth. He has muscular force, organs of speech, and to complete the sublime idea in this elegant description, excretions also. Hence all celestial and terrestrial bodies constitute a part of this deity, from the most subtile æther to the grossest clod; from the whole assemblage of gods to the stupid opossum!"

This torrent of degradation clearly evinces that this gentleman has not sufficiently weighed the merits of the Hindoo system. This reasoning is not altogether of the Vedanti, or platonic school, but inclines rather towards "admitting the ac-

sole primary cause, efficient, substantial, and formal of all secondary causes, and of all appearances whatever, but endued in its highest degree, with a sublime providential wisdom, and proceeding by ways incomprehensible to the spirit which emanate from it; an opinion Gotama* never taught, and which we have no authority to believe, but which, as it is grounded on the doctrine of an universel Creator, supremely wise, and a constant preserver, supremely benevolent, differs as widely from the pantheism of Spinoza and Toland as the affirmation of a proposition differs from the negation of it."

A happy illustration of this sentiment thus appears in the same page.

"The passage to which I allude," says Sir William, "is a speech of Varuna to her son, where he says, "That spirit from which these created beings proceed;

* The Aristotle of India.

through which, having proceeded from it, they live; toward which they tend, and in which they are ultimately absorbed; that spirit study to know; that spirit is the great one."

How far the system of the Hindoos, as asserted by this anonymous gentleman, is mere Spinosism, let the reader now decide*.

I must, however, do him the justice to say that he appears to relax a little from this argument, when he says † "It is true, that in the next verse we are informed, in flat contradiction to the above, that this God is a spirit by no means the object of any sense, and which can only be conceived by a mind wholly abstracted from matter."

I know the reader will here indignantly exclaim—"What! with such an evidence before him; with the evidence of the vene-

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* See Appendix D. † F. P. 89.

rated Geeta; with the evidence of the volumes of the Asiatic society, of which he is perhaps a member; with the evidence of those vedas and sastras with which he would appear to be so well acquainted; with the evidence even of Menu, whose institutes he so liberally condemns—and who says, * "He whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity—even He, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person—in the form of Brahma, the great forefather of all spirits."

With all these evidences before him, how can he, with any consistency, liken to an opossum the sublime Deity of the Hindoos?—with the evidence, besides, of the Poorans?"—Stop here, for God's sake, reader; we shall never have done if you wait to develope all that is exhibited

* Menu, p. 2.

in the Eighteen Poorans, and the numerous other works that treat upon the subject. You have been precipitate—much too quick upon my friend; carry it not with so high a hand; a single word of his can resolve all your questions, and silence every argument; for, know from him, that all the pure and exalted sentiments in the Hindoo code have been borrowed from our scriptures. Nay, marvel not! but hear him; for, admitting all that you have said, * "this only proves, that when they borrow from the fountain of truth they are correct, but are plunged into error and absurdities as soon as they attempt to think for themselves." Having, however, considered them content with the stupid opossum, these rare things, I presume, only occupy a place in their system, like the selections in our cabinets, more for ornament than use. And here we discover the reason of their present willingness to disclose the various beauties of their rich

* F. 89.

repository; for they are gratified to mark the delight with which we recognise and appropriate those inestimable jewels which so strikingly respond to the exalted treasures we possess.

But perhaps this gentleman, not liking the freedom of my arguments, will tell you, * "That the vindicator is a convert to Hinduism is more than problematical, and that he is a settled enemy to the doctrines of Christianity, his whole performance testifies."

I am glad he is gone so far. The confession is somewhat in my favour; as, from Atheism, with Mr. Fuller, I have already advanced, it would appear, to Hinduism, with his anonymous friend—"*Je suis donc en bon train*;" difficulties yield as we proceed, and step by step we gain our journey's end. Hopes may therefore be en-

* F. 114.

tertained of ultimate perfection, since, thus, from Atheism to Hinduism

> " And thence, by soft transition, we repair
> " From earthly vehicles, to those of air."

That is, from the stupid opossum, through Brahma, to the Logos.

But in thus admitting my conversion to Hinduism, it does not absolutely follow that I reject the doctrines of Christianity; for if I believe Crishna to be Narayan, the spirit of God floating on the face of the waters, who descended to the earth for the benefit of mankind, I entertain, I conceive, a notion not very inconsistent with Christianity: and, on this gentleman's own principles, it might fairly be supposed that I thus manifest the improving influence of these good things, which the Pundits may have borrowed from our sacred volumes. That they *have* borrowed, seems certain, in his opinion; for he acquaints

us that * " Many learned men are of *opinion*, that all their excellencies are derived from the books of the old and new Testaments. Any unprejudiced reader must discern this, and (the proof is doubtless admirable) he will have a satisfactory proof of it from the consideration that *where* their writers *obviously* copy the sacred scriptures, they are consistent and natural; and where they do not follow them, they are irrational, absurd, and ridiculous."

This mode of reasoning, I believe, is what is vulgarly termed " Begging the question," and he has fully adopted it. But had their writers *obviously* copied the sacred scriptures, *doubt* would be at an end, and we should require no *opinion* to guide our judgment. This would be like saying, " I am of opinion, Sir, you are a thief; for you have been several times

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* F 81.

found guilty of larceny." A plain man would have said, I *know* you to be a thief, &c. But what shall we say, if it appear that this man's dishonesty had never been substantiated? He was possessed, it is true, of many rare gems; must he, therefore, have stolen them from the jewellers? Might he not have found them at Golconda? And must he necessarily be a thief, because his gems happen to resemble those we picked up at Tyre and Sidon, among the Phenicians? He might, perhaps, thus observe—" I am now an old man, have been from my infancy engaged in this traffick, and have dealt largely with the Jews; and, possibly, those good things you speak of having, may formerly have been mine: but this I will not assert; for there are rich mines in all countries: possession, therefore, is no proof that either your wares or mine have been surreptitiously obtained. You have doubtless the advantage—for *you* exhibit nothing but choice articles; *you* have made a good selection; and in this you evince your judgment. But *I* must still go on in the old

way—endeavour to suit all tastes; and, as all my customers are not so *rich* as Solomon, I must not throw my pearls before swine. Between me and thee, let the world judge."

I must, however, confess, that my anonymous friend's sentiments on this question receive some countenance from the opinion of Sir William Jones, on the conformity of Crishna's story with the history of our Saviour.

In the first volume of the Asiatic Researches,* Sir William observes, "This motley story must induce an opinion, that the spurious gospels which abounded in the first age of Christianity, had been brought to India, and the wildest parts of them repeated to the Hindoos, who engrafted them on the old fable of Cesava, the Apollo of India."

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* Page 273.

Sir William Jones, however, had already told us,* "that the name of Crishna, and the general outline of his story, were long anterior to the birth of our Saviour, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly;" and in previously speaking of the Egyptians, he deemed it "more probable that they visited the Sarmans of India, as the sages of Greece visited them, rather to acquire than to impart knowledge; nor is it likely that the self-sufficient Brahmins would have received them as preceptors."†

Now, if this opinion merits any consideration, as applied to the Egyptians, will it not have some force as opposed to the foregoing suggestion of Sir William Jones? If the Brahmins disdained to learn from the Egyptian sages, who were probably as learned as those of Palestine, with what patience would they have listened to the lectures of the first Christian

* Page 273. † 271.

disciples replete, as we may well suppose them to have been, with invectives against their images, their altars, and their idolatry?—from such a people would they have deigned to borrow any ornaments for the decoration of their favourite deity?—as if the Brahmins themselves had wanted genius for such a task!

Moreover, when we consider that the Avatar of Crishna is expressly said to have been occasioned by the tyranny of Cansa (the Indian Herod) King of Muttra: that Cansa had been foretold, that a child, soon to be born, would deprive him of his kingdom and his life; that, in consequence, he ordered all new-born infants to be destroyed.* When, I say, we consider these assumed facts, which seem to form the ground-work of the story, and look back, beyond the time of Homer, for the manifestation of Crishna; must it not appear very extraordinary, that the

* Ayeen Akbery, 3d. 232.

Brahmins should have neglected for a thousand years to engraft these facts on the story of their shepherd god—thus delaying the foundation till the superstructure had been completed? The candour of the reader will decide how far the argument is consonant either with reason or probability.

On the subject of the Lingam, Mr. Fuller's friend is very severe upon me.

*"What surprizes us most," says he, "in the strange work of this Bengal officer, is his declaration, (page 100) that though he had visited many temples of celebrity in Bengal, Benares, Mutra, Canouge, and Hurduar, and a hundred places besides, yet he never witnessed any exhibition at their shrines which had the appearance of indecency. Sparing as much as possible the feelings of our readers,

* F. p. 110.

we ask the Vindicator, did he never see the Lingam?—Did he never see, in an hundred places, this impure emblem the object of adoration?—Is this no exhibition that has the appearance of indecency?—It is difficult to speak on this impure subject and not shock the delicacy of the reader; yet some further information is necessary. Let him observe, that the Lingam is an image composed of three different parts, which may be thus denominated, the pedestal, the small cup on the pedestal, and the small pillar inserted in the cup. The pedestal on which it stands, represents Brahma; the cup Vishno; and the pillar Seeva. If, however, he wishes to take a view of this idol, "this speaking picture of good sense," as he says elsewhere of Doorga, let him step to the British Museum where he may find a marble one of curious workmanship, brought from India, standing in a corner of the great hall."

Now, courteous reader, I like a man who comes thus fairly forward, and ap-

peals to facts, in support of the cause he has undertaken;—it is giving his opponent "fair play," and leaving the disputed matter to the judgment of an unbiassed public, who, from the evidence of their senses, are thus enabled to give a fair and full decision on the point at issue. Then

> "Spare your remarks, say not a single word,
> "The picture seen, why is the painter heard?"

I have been to the British Museum, and have seen the object of this gentleman's reference; but, by the beard of Brahma, I swear, that I can therein discover nothing that has the smallest appearance of *indecency*.

To the public, therefore, I confidently appeal; and if any unbiassed man or woman in England will conscientiously declare that this gentleman is warranted in charging its appearance with indecency, I hereby solemnly pledge myself to resign the Hindoos to their fate, and to

consider all that I have said in their favour as having entirely proceeded from an illusion of the brain.

But, happily, the gentleman himself obviates the necessity of such a sacrifice, by observing, that *"perhaps the Vindicator has not had discernment to find out what this statue meant, which must certainly have met his eye, who has been at more than a hundred temples."

"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine."

For, candid reader, were there any *obvious* indecency in this statue, no room could be left for the exercise of my discernment.

His judgment here, for a moment, stept aside, to wander in the regions of inconsistency.

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*F. p. 111.

He speaks again,—*" Lest the Vindicator should not know how dear this compound abomination is to the Hindoos, especially to all the followers of Vishnoo; he shall have some information from Sonnerat, which delicacy requires should be retained in the sufficiently plain original."†

Here his memory has taken a short ramble after his judgment;—

> " Where beams of warm imagination play,
> " The memory's soft figures melt away."

He would otherwise have more correctly stated, that this " compound abomination," the Lingam, is more peculiarly dear to all the followers of *Seeva*; and that the prime object of *Vishnoo* worship, is the mystic stone *Salgram*, in which the *Avatars*, and other personages of their mythology, " invisible to mortal sight,"

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* F. p. 112. † See Appendix E.

are supposed to have taken up their residence.

I may, perhaps be wrong in ascribing this error to a defect of recollection.

I admire the delicacy of this gentleman, which induces him to retain "in the sufficiently plain original,"* a passage, (page 112) which, abstractly considered, exhibits no term of indecency; whereas, his explanation of the same object (page 110) is not only given in plain English, but in a gross obscenity of language unfit to meet the eye of European delicacy. Here, I endeavour to trace his judgment, but the reader recollects where we have left it.

He, in fact, seems such a sceptic on Hindoo grounds, that he can discern little in the picture or the statue, beyond the mere idol. He cannot discover the God

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* See Appendix E.

within the mind, neither perceive with Mr. Hastings how spiritual existences may be represented by corporeal forms, nor see any thing in the compound figure of the Lingam beyond the rude material sense, calculated for the meridian of the vulgar, who, nevertheless, when asked to explain the object of their worship, invariably declare it to represent Maha Deva and Parvati, and as such only, strictly speaking, is it worshipped. Hence, accordingly, it is often exhibited with four faces, or heads, and sometimes with five. And of these, I have half a dozen myself, now in London.

This gentleman, however, cannot see the object at this exalted height. He cannot trace the recondite meaning, the enlarged and liberal view—spirit acting upon matter—the active and passive energies of nature,

"Communicating male and female light,
"Which two great sexes animate the world."

On the story of the Lingam transcribed from Sonnerat, taking it in its broadest sense, I shall only remark from Sir William Jones, that " it never seems to have entered the heads of the legislators or people, that any thing natural could be offensively obscene; a singularity which pervades all their writings and conversation, *but is no proof of depravity in their morals.*"*

One moral, at least, must be obvious to the Hindoos on this occasion; which is the transcendant excellence of *devotional acts*, and the encouragement consequently held out to persist in such acts, which, by urging the mind to the contemplation of the divinity, must constantly check the influence of the passions, and operate the ultimate improvement of their conduct. But devotion is of no avail, unless supported by habitual virtue and sincerity; for,

* F. P. 115.

"To a man contaminated by sensuality, neither the vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor strict observances, nor pious austerities, ever procure felicity."*

The learned Paulinus, a bare-footed Carmelite, who resided thirteen years in India, has the following observation in his voyage to the East Indies.†

"We find also by the sacred scriptures, that the custom of worshipping Priapus, as the symbol of the all-creating sun, (Shiva) in subterranean temples and caverns, prevailed fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ."

Accordingly we find the good king Asa, as referred to by Paulinus, destroying the idol which his mother *Maachah* had set up in the grove.‡

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* Menu, p. 29. † P. 381.

‡ 1 Kings xv. 13.

Now, as the Brahmins are said to have so largely borrowed from our scriptures, perhaps the worship of the Lingam owes its origin to the stone erected by Jacob to the Lord in the wilderness of Haran.—"And he set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it And he called the name of the place Bethel, that is, the house of God."

Thousands of such stones, rough from the hand of nature, may be seen throughout India, under trees, or on the banks of rivers, on which the people daily strew fresh flowers, and pour the lustral water. In some places they are called *Maha Mia*, or the great *mother*: in others, *Maha Deva*, or active *nature*.

To the same source, perhaps, may be traced a similar custom among the ancient Greeks, according to Pausanias, who informs us,* that "It was formerly the cus-

* Pausanias, vol. ii. p. 230.

tom with all the Greeks to reverence huge stones in place of statues of the gods."

And in the temple of Apollo at Delphi, Pausanias tell us, "you will see a stone of a moderate size; this they anoint with oil every day, and, during every festival, cover it with new shorn wool."*

The covering with wool to keep it warm seems peculiarly to evince an occult meaning; and accordingly, we find that, "from the first, the Thespians venerated *Love*, beyond all the gods; and they have a most ancient statue of this divinity, which is nothing more than a rude stone."†

"Look round the world, behold the chain of love,
"Combining all below, and all above."

Pausanius, it seems, had first regarded these Grecian fables as "apparently full of folly," but he subsequently observes—

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* Vol. iii. 172. † Vol. iii. 59.

"Such of the Greeks as were formerly reckoned wise, designedly concealed their wisdom in enigmas: and I conjecture, that what I have just now related concerning Saturn, (of his swallowing a stone given him by Rhea instead of Jupiter) contains something of the wisdom of the Greeks. And we should consider things relative to divine matters after this manner.*"

The enlightened Mr. Maurice seems sensible of this truth when he observes, that "concerning these extravagant mythological details of the Hindoos, I must remark, that however mysterious the allegory, and however wild and romantic the language in which it is clothed, this fact may be depended upon, that there in general lies concealed at the bottom some physical meaning, or deep theological truth."†

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* Vol. ii. 269. † Indian Antiquities, ii. 345.

"O! thou, who seekest after knowledge, learn a lesson from these fables!—every atom of the creation is a sublime temple, which the Deity hath erected that human imagination may not wander in vain pursuits."*

This sceptic writer, however, cannot see this: he can discover nothing in the tale of Doorga Bhavanee but a mere battle between a "loathsome, abominable, disgusting female form" and a buffalo—"This the Vindicator calls a speaking picture of good sense, representing the good and evil principle contending for supremacy. And this we suppose he seriously believes. How wonderful are the ways of divine Providence! He who leaves the path of understanding, must abide in the congregation of the dead. It is ordinarily found that they who refuse to credit divine revelation, become volunteers

* Ayeen Akbery.

in faith; believers in all unbelief, and in the just judgments of God, are abandoned to disgrace their own intellects, by crediting the grossest and most ridiculous absurdities."*

Shade of the immortal Jones, arise, and vindicate me from these foul aspersions!—yes, verily, Sir William Jones would thank him for the whole of this compliment, who represents *Doorga* and the armed *Pallas*, as "*Heroic Virtue*, or *Valour united with Wisdom*, who slew demons and giants, and protected the wise and virtuous."* Did Sir William Jones then "refuse to credit divine revelation?"†—and, if not, with what consistency am *I* charged with infidelity, for thinking as he did? but

——— "all your attempts
Shall fall on me, like brittle shafts on armour
That break themselves."

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* See F. P. 91. † A. R. i. p. 252.

This gentleman seems not sufficiently acquainted with the character of my beloved Doorga.

What gloomy shadows of a troubled mind obscure his intellectual ray, and, ceaseless, turn my Pallas to a Hecate! —" a loathsome, abominable disgusting, female form!"—This cannot be the image of my goddess!—Spleen surely snatch'd the pencil from its place, dipp'd it in gall, and gave it back to his congenial hand, to trace the horrid picture in his mind.—I recognize her not, in this vile dress—Her face is ever beautiful—And such is *Virtue*—But *Doorga* requires great sacrifices!—Who knows not this of *Virtue?* Yes! *great sacrifices!* a sacrifice of the whole man—of all his passions at the shrine of *reason*, *truth*, and *virtue*.

Observe, from this writer, the following sublime burst of impassioned eloquence.*

* See page 92.

" This Bengal officer seems in the contemplation of his beloved Cali, to have amply drunk into her spirit, thinking of little else than of sacrificing or being sacrificed.

" It seems that Doorga Bhavanee must have an offering made of the Bible, and the poor missionaries, else she will slay 30,000 men! ruthless goddess! ah! ill-fated missionaries!

" Whether the *real devil*, or the *imaginary Cali* take them, (the Hindoos) it is no concern of these gentlemen, provided *Jesus Christ* have nothing to do with them."*

Here he mistakes again—Cali is not my beloved—I like as little as he does *that Hecate* " whose power extends over heaven, the earth, the sea, and hell." But of the virtuous *Doorga* I entertain no

* Page 125.

dread—She is my friend; the friend of the missionaries, and of all others who mean well. But, if *he* considers himself a fit sacrifice; if *his* portion of virtue merits her hostile consideration; I should be sorry to dispute his claim. Yet, let him bear in mind that he must be first purified by her ethereal touch, ere he can, with safety to his future happiness, venture to approach the awful shrine of the ruthless Cali, to whom I from this moment devote him and Mr. Fuller, and the missionaries, and his 30,000 men. And if he can fairly escape the clutches of my "imaginary Cali," he may safely set his "real devil" at defiance: and this, I presume, he is Christian enough to believe; whether it be his fortune to trace the less obvious path of Enoch, or the more manifest ascension of Elijah.

But he says, "It will not help the anti-christian cause to say, the Hindoos do not now offer human sacrifices—who can prove the contrary? Is not the Calica Pooran acknowledged a divine produc-

tion? And is it not on the authority of the bloody chapter in this Pooran, that thousands of birds and buffalo calves are annually sacrifiecd, both in Bengal and the contiguous provinces."*

Really, gentle reader, I am no more an advocate for human sacrifices than this pious Christian. And, while I lament their having ever occurred, I must, yet, do the Hindoo the justice to confess my belief that such acts have always proceeded from the most pious motive—a voluntary offering of his best gift, by the individual, at the throne of grace, as an atonement for sin, in the fervent hope of that mercy which justifies the ways of God to man.

Can those unhappy members of society who annually sacrifice their lives on the altars of despair, in this country, plead for the rash act a motive so excuseable?

* Page 105.

If the sacrifice of cattle be a vice, it was the vice of Abel, the vice of Noah, the vice of Abraham and the vice of the Children of Israel under Moses and his successors. And what was heretofore done by the sanction of the Lord can, assuredly, be no great vice in the Hindoos.

"Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain,
"'Tis to mistake it, costs the time and pain."

Here it may be asked whether the sin is in the offering, or in the act of sacrifice?

With Christians, indeed, since one great sacrifice has served for a general atonement, the sin would be in the offering, not in the act. With Hindoos the reverse, were the motive merely human; since the law declares that * "Not a mortal exists, more sinful than he, who, without an oblation to the Manes, or the Gods, desires to enlarge his own flesh with the flesh of another creature."

* Menu, p. 129.

How would the gentle spirit of the Hindoo legislator revolt on contemplating the thousands of cattle daily sacrificed, in Christian countries, on the altars of *Sensuality!*

If in this, however, there be no sin, where lies the absolute sin in the mistaken piety of the Hindoo, who brings his gift to the altar of the Lord, and devotes it with holy texts?

I have been present at the sacrifice of kids at Cali-Ghaut, near Calcutta, and at Binde-Basny, near Mirzapoor, about forty miles above Benares, but I have never seen "the whole assembly," nor any individual of it, "besmear their faces with the blood," nor, "roll themselves in it,"* as stated by this gentleman from the 8th volume of the Asiatic Researches.

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* F. p. 104.

If such a practice exists, or has existed in India, we directly trace its connection with the ordination of the priesthood in Leviticus.

24. * And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet; and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.†

30. And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments; and upon his sons, and upon his sons garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons garments with him."

I am glad that my testimony regarding the moral honesty of the Hindoos, meets with some support from this writer's arguments. "The account, he says," ‡"is spe-

* Chap. 8. † Appendix F. ‡ P. 109.

cious and imposing; in some respects it is certainly the truth; but it is not the whole truth. The fact is, that through a principle of oddly conceived honour, they will in general take care of whatever you place in their confidence; but if you turn the key, and place it in your own pocket, the delicacy of their honour and conscience is at an end, and they will readily take whatever they can conveniently purloin;"—though the key is in your own pocket!

"Risum teneatis amici?"

This is really "an oddly conceived" sentiment, and would argue not only that their sense of honour is superior to the fear of punishment, but that, if you withdraw this confidence, and release them from responsibility, your property is in danger. Were it even so, it would be a good reason for our unqualified manifestation of that liberal confidence which must so eminently conduce to our own comfort and happiness; and if this

"oddly conceived principle of honour" be inherent in the people, it would be injudicious to weaken it by a distrust, which might set their ingenuity to work to evade all our precautions. But, did not this principle generally prevail, what security could we have, by placing our keys in the hands of any particular servant, as we always do? On him, doubtless, the responsibility is great, and a breach of trust would be infamous. But what responsibility attaches to twenty other servants, perhaps, whom we have about the house, and who have daily access to our keys? Their robbing us, therefore, according to this gentleman's argument, would be no violation of trust, no dereliction of honour. We had not entrusted *them* with our keys, and thence had no other security against transgression, than our own vigilance and circumspection. Any offence on their part would, therefore, only be against the law, whose restraints will ever be found a feeble guard, compared with a pervading principle of ho-

nour and fidelity, which justly merits all our confidence.

This confidence, thank God, we have the discernment to bestow; and happily we find it not misplaced. But the sentiment which inspires it we, seldom, fully estimate while yet among the people. There, its operation being general, our wonder is not excited; because, having gone out young to India, and knowing little of the great world, we think the sentiment universal. Its value, therefore, is little appreciated till we return to our native country, where experience soon compels us to reflect back upon the Hindoos that justice to which their virtues are so well entitled.

The climax of indignation seems to have attained its highest altitude with this gentleman towards the close of his discourse. This, I presume, is consistent with the rules of rhetoric, in which, however, I must confess, I am no great proficient; and he seems, thus wisely, to have

reserved his greatest force to give me the charitable *coup de grace*, in the struggling moments of my expiring cause.

I had said, in page 160, of the Vindication, that the Indian unitarians will at first require some little management; for having so recently abjured the Indian triad, Brahma, Vishnoo, and Seeva, they will not immediately, perhaps, relish the gospel doctrine of the Trinity."

This has sublimated his immortal anger to the very *acmé* of displeasure, and he thus indignantly bursts forth.

* "This surpasses all that has gone before, and outdoes all that the profane deists have ventured to write or speak against the revelation of God. How deplorable must the case of such an one be, unless ignorance of the subject can be pleaded in his excuse?"

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* P. 115.

What I have here written must answer for itself. The meaning I think is very clear. But, if I had even compared with the *Trinity*, the active energies of the *Supreme Being*—CREATION, PRESERVATION, and DESTRUCTION, it could not, in candour, have merited so severe a judgment as he has passed upon it. But I will tell him still more, I will tell him that I have heard a Brahmin at Benares, a student from Tirhoot, describe the Indian triad in the very terms of the Athanasian creed. What called forth this explanation was a dispute between two of my servants, whether a certain circumstance they were relating was more justly to be attributed to Vishnoo or to Seeva. One zealously contended for Vishnoo; the other as ardently for Seeva; when the Brahmin interposing, reconciled them by his elucidation.

If I have said that the mere unitarian, who has abjured the Indian triad, will not readily adopt the gospel doctrine of the Trinity, I conceive the argument to be

neither inconsistent nor profane. If this be profanation, what shall we say of the following suggestion of Dr. Barrow?

*"The doctrine of the Holy Trinity will not appear incredible to minds to which the notion of different persons in the Godhead, has long been familiar; nor will the relations of father and son, or the union of divine with human nature, offend those, with whom the repeated incarnations of their own Vishnoo, is an established article of faith."

Had Dr. Barrow taken up the question in the view that I have done, he must necessarily, I apprehend, have expressed my very sentiments. And he well knows that there are many even among ourselves, (to say nothing of the Mahomedans,) who, like the Indian Unitarian, reject the doctrine of the Trinity, and whose conversion would thus be more difficult than that of

* Sermon, p. 25

the Hindoos. The reader must be satisfied that I am not of this number; since, by the confession of this writer, I am "a convert to Hinduism." The mystery is thus explicable to me, were it for no other reason than that assigned by Dr. Barrow, supported, as it is, by the explanation of my Pundit.

This, in fact, is the corner stone of the building, and the stumbling block of the Mahomedans. The Hindoos overlook this obstacle, and thus, one step fairly made, we find it easier to advance. I am, therefore, humbly of opinion, that this very coincidence presents a fairer prospect for the conversion of the Hindoos, than any other argument which the wisdom of our divines can ever possibly advance.

The reader will now observe that, in being "a convert to Hinduism," I am already half a Christian, and in a fair way to full conversion through the influence of the enlightened lectures of Mr. Fuller

and his anonymous friend. But their denying me Christianity, or even Deism, makes nothing against my arguments. If, inherently, they are bad, no baptism will improve them; like a *noun substantive* they must stand by themselves; nor will the *potential* influence of the *imperative* anathema of these gentlemen weigh a single grain in the scale of public equity. Knowing this, I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to suppress my feelings in the course of this discussion, to oppose argument to intemperance, and to regulate just indignation by the measure of moderation.

"And I do count it a most rare revenge
That I can do thus—with such a sweet neglect,
Pluck from them all the pleasure of their malice,
For that's the mark of all their ingenious drifts,
To wound my patience, howso'er they seem
To aim at other objects; which if miss'd
Their envy's like an arrow, shot upright,
That, in the fall, endangers their own heads."

I think I cannot consistently overlook the following query put by Mr. Fuller's friend.

"Has the Vindicator never heard or known, in his long residence in India, of young girls being dedicated to the deities, and sent to a pagod for that purpose, where they are instructed and debauched by the Brahmins? If he has not, many others have, and know the following account from Sonnerat to be strictly consistent with truth."* Here follows a detail respecting these women, to which I must refer the reader, while I inform him, that, at the town of Betoor in the Doab, or Messopotamia of India, about ten miles above the military station of Cawnpoor, I once visited a *Mahunt*, or head of a Hindoo religious establishment, and understanding he had been in the Decan, or southern coast of India, I questioned him regarding the tribe of dancing women attendant on the temples in that country, so contrary to the custom in Bengal, where men alone are employed. He ac-

* Page 107.

cordingly informed me, that it was usual in that country, with those whom heaven had not favoured with the blessing of early offspring, to vow, in their anxiety, the dedication of their first child, whether male or female, to the exclusive service of the divinity, in the hope of future favour from the approving deity. By these means, he said, the temples were originally furnished: the children were instructed in music and dancing, and retained in the service of the gods. The supply becoming numerous, they were formed into a regular society, assigned habitations near the temples, and encouraged to marry among themselves. Hence their numbers had increased. Their offspring in due time united with their parents in furnishing harmony to the temples.

This is the sum of the information I received on this head; and I must take the liberty of saying, that, with respect to the initiation of the female votaries into the mysteries of the *Bona Dea*, it seems rather bold in Mr. Fuller's friend to assert

the account given by Sonnerat "to be strictly consistent with truth."* What passes within the sanctuary of the temple, must, I conceive, be very difficult to be known—To one however, who "waxes desperate with imagination" all things seem easy—"the forms of things unknown he turns to shapes, and gives to airy nothing, a local habitation and a name."—Who, among the Hindoos, dares violate the sanctuary, and lift the veil of secrecy that shrouds the officiating priest? The laws of Moses were very strict upon this point, as we read in the book of *Numbers.*

"But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die."†

"And the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."‡

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* Fuller's Pamphlet, p. 108 and 113.

† Chap. iv. 20. ‡ Chap. iii. 38.

The Brahmins, I believe, are not less tenacious of their privileges than were the Israelites.

As this gentleman is so fond of putting questions, I beg to know of him, whether he has ever known or heard of such things being practised in Bengal?—if he has, I must confess he has the advantage of me in point of knowledge of Indian mysteries.

THE

MISSIONARY TRACT.

I Shall here present the reader with a translated copy of the Missionary Tract, so often referred to in this controversy;—a controversy which is likely to end like that of our first parents,—

——"Neither self-condemning,
"And of their vain contest appeared no end."

The reader will decide how far this production is calculated to promote the cause of Christianity among the Hindoos, by the sublimity of its passages, the importance of its matter, or the novelty of in-

formation thus conveyed to the mind of the enlightened Brahmin. As I purpose commenting on some of the passages as I proceed, I, therefore, find it necessary to preface them with an exhibition of the following extracts on the subject, from Mr. Fuller's pamphlet.

"But before he, (the Vindicator) or Major Scott Waring, had thus publicly animadverted on a private translation, they should have known a few particulars concerning it. How could they tell whether it was drawn up by the missionaries?—Or, if it were, whether the translation were faithful? I can assure them and the public, that it was not written by an European, but by a native; and that the translation is very far from being a faithful one. In referring to the first of these circumstances, I do not mean either to disparage the tract or the writer, nor to exempt the missionaries from having a concern in it. They doubtless approved of it, and printed it, and it was circulated as an address from them. All I mean to

say on this point is, that some allowance should be made for the style or manner of address, as coming from a Hindoo. At the same time it may be presumed that no Hindoo would call his own countrymen barbarians."

Mr. Fuller's friend also states, that "the small tract in which this is to be found, is, we believe, the work of a native, called Ram Boshoo, and not the work of the Missionaries, though they printed it for him."

Whether the translation be faithful or not, I am not qualified to decide; but I entertain a confidence in its author, that has not, in the least, been shaken by any thing these gentlemen have yet advanced against it. Besides, how does Mr. Fuller know that the translation is unfaithful, since he understands not the original?

I shall now proceed to the tract itself.

TRANSLATION

OF AN

ADDRESS TO THE INHABITANTS OF INDIA,

FROM THE

MISSIONARIES OF SRÍRÁMPOOR,

INVITING THEM TO BECOME

CHRISTIANS.

The Original (which is in Verse) is in the Bengal Language, and printed in a Character peculiar to that Province.

THE MESSENGER OF GLAD TIDINGS.

1. Hear all ye people of the land, hear with attention how ye may obtain salvation from hell, hard to escape!

2. No one is able to describe it. The thought of money and riches is vain.

3. All such things are calculated only for this life: let all men observe that this world is not eternal.

4. The enjoyment of all these goods is but for a short time; for at his death no one can take his riches with him.

5. He must resign all his garments, ornaments, and wealth to his kindred, for after that he will have no corporeal form.

3. "This world is not eternal."—This they already know: 'tis the chief tenet of their philosophy, and the main principle of their creed.

6. Know all ye people that after life comes death, and after death the going to heaven or hell!

6. "After life comes death"

"Death is a man, do all we can,
That never spareth none."

This, and the foregoing, are intended to correct the pagan error of transmigration arising from the fanciful notion of the vital spirit being homogeneous with the divine nature, like rays from the great globe of light, and thus assigning a purgatorial state of conscious existence to the soul, till, by successive degrees of purification, passing through the several spheres of Indra, Brahma, &c. it ultimately reaches the prime source of its emanation.

7. Unless ye are cleansed from evil ye will not go to heaven. Ye will be cast headlong into the awful regions of hell!

7. This their own sastras abundantly teach.

8. What a sort of a place hell is, or what are its torments no one knows—no one is able to imagine!

8. "No one is able to imagine"—their own imagination has been tolerably fertile on this head; as may be seen in page 32 of the "Vindication," of which the following may serve as a sample,

"They shall be mangled by ravens and owls; shall swallow cakes boiling hot; shall walk over inflamed

sands; and shall feel the pangs of being baked like the vessels of a potter."

9. Hell is full of inevitable sufferings in the midst of fire never to be extinguished. Its extinction will never come to pass.

9. This they will never believe. It contradicts both their religion and philosophy. They believe that nothing has any actual permanent existence but God: that matter is a mere transient illusion, and will ultimately be destroyed; and

10. Having fallen into it, brethren, there is then no salvation. Its beginning and its duration are of infinite time.

10.—that all nature will be reduced to its first principles. Whatever has been created may be destroyed. Hath not the potter power over the clay, which he hath fashioned with his hands? What is this clay? what is matter? what is even this great globe that

11. With constant meditation, fear, lest hereafter ye fall into this dreadful pit of hell, into that fire which cannot be quenched.

11.—we inhabit but a concretion of friable atoms, which by the operation of fire, can instantly be reduced into impalpable powder and sublimated into air—

"A breath can shake them as a breath has made"

And if we daily see this exemplified in the common operations of chemistry on the hardest substances in nature, shall we not believe it possible of the whole earth, of all created form, under the hands of the great Alchymist?

12. Seek a remedy, people, seek a remedy; for without a remedy ye shall not obtain salvation.

13. In other *sastras* there is not any account of salvation, and yet how many discourses there are upon the rites and ceremonies peculiar to the people of different countries.

14. Both Hindoos and Mussulmans have many *sastras*, most of which we have examined.

15. In none of them are to be found the principles of the true salvation. Those (your) *sastras* are fit only for the amusement of children, and your books of philosophy are (mere) fables.

16. Formerly we ourselves had only such *sastras;* but having obtained the great *sastra*, we flung those away.

13. " Is not this abusing their *sastras*, with the addition of throwing ridicule on their ceremonies?

14. " *We* have examined" —that is, the missionaries, native as well as European.

15. Here the argument is repeated, " in none of them the true salvation"—" *balli-anondo shastro*," sastras to amuse children, (i. e. unworthy of men) " *oopokot'her Neyay*" fabulous philosophy. Is not the Neyay a sastra treating of theology, metaphysics, &c. *See Ayeen Akbery, v. 3. p. 93.*

16. Who are *we*? Is not this the European speaking? and yet, this is said to be the production of a Hindoo, who, doubtless, would not " call his own countrymen barbarians." But admitting the fact, that it was the produc-

tion of a Hindoo, " Is it any wonder then (says Mr. Fuller's friend) that a poor converted Hindoo, on feeling the efficacy of the gospel, *should have asserted*, that these are abominable fables, and that their books contain not the means of salvation?" So then this bantling of a Hindoo convert, fostered by the missionaries, and circulated by their sanction, did call their sastras " abominable fables" —" *mileetcho bolee*," the discourses of barbarians." And if a Hindoo would not " call his own countrymen barbarians" on whom but the missionaries can we lay the accusation? Calling them barbarians was bad enough, but abusing their sastras still worse. It was in fact telling them that *Menu* was an imposter; that God had no hand in his " abominable fables", and that, consequently, their religion was false. Thus, disbelieving the son, Menu, they would necessarily reject the father, Brahma, that sent him, and ultimately, hurl the shafts of incredulity against the throne of the Almighty himself.

This must tend greatly to the benefit of order in society, and of social happiness. But, whatever may be our opinion on the subject, let us place ourselves in the situation of the Hindoos thus attending to discourses against their religion, and to oblique denunciations of eternal punishment in hell fire against believers in a doctrine which had ever most implicitly been regarded as the mandate of the divinity.

This is not the way to convert a great and ancient people, learned, wise, and pious.

17. The great *sastra* of religion contains glad tidings; for in it alone is to be found the way to salvation.

17. Here, a third time—in our sastra *alone* salvation is to be found.

18. The great *sastra* of religion had not appeared here. Some time since we obtained it, and have now brought it here.

19. Hear, hear, ye people, hear with due attention! Let him who is willing come, and we will cause it to be read.

20. Hereafter do ye and your brethren abominate the discourses of barbarians. The *sastras* of barbarians contain not the means of salvation.

20. And here, again, the exclusive argument of salvation is more forcibly urged.

Mr. Fernandez's elucidation is not convincing; for, if

the Brahmins call all those *Mileetcha*, who are not subservient to the *sastra*, must *we* not be included? our saying therefore, that "this is not the barbarians' sastra," must, manifestly in their opinion, be a solecism, that even enticing-tale-believing-children must deride.*

21. If you and your brethren wish for the means of salvation, be attentive and hear somewhat of an example.

21. Here they are exhorted to seek the means of salvation, as if the whole tenour of their lives had not, unremittingly, been directed to this great end, from the first dawnings of reason, progressively, to the highest attainments of human science.

22. When God created the world, after he had finished his work, he issued a great commandment to all mankind.

23. He gave a description of heaven and hell, and afterwards declared the laws of justice and injustice.

24. Of what God said we give you this proof—"Hear all ye people my infallible commands!

* Appendix G.

25. " If any good man shall live a virtuous life, I will give unto him everlasting happiness in heaven.

26. " If any one live in the ways of wickedness, I will certainly cast him into the fire which cannot be quenched."

27. Such was the original commandment of the Lord; but after that mankind became prone to wickedness.

28. God knew this, that there was no redemption; and he again said that some remedy should be found.

29. Out of his loving-kindness he provided another means of a precious nature, for which there was a second commandment for the redemption of mankind.

30. He said, " A certain man shall be born of a virgin, who shall suffer in his own person the punishment due to evil.

31. " Whatever sinner shall truly take refuge in him, him will I assuredly raise up."

32. Who shall be born? who shall suffer? who shall bear the burthen? Even the *Avatar*, the Lord Jesu, who had no one to protect him.

33. He appeared with a body shining with the glory of God, and shone with various splendour in the midst of darkness.

34. He said, " When I shall be born on the earth, and shall suffer in my own person, the punishment due to all,

35. " Whatsover sinner shall come and take refuge with me, wilt thou not (O Father) deliver him from danger?"

36. And God said with a loud voice, " I will—these are my words—I will raise up whatever mortal shall take refuge with thee."

37. After that the Lord was conceived in a virgin, in the womb of Mary, for the fulfilling of the prophecies.

38. And after being born upon the earth, he bore the name of Jesus Christ, and performed many miracles in sundry places.

39. The blind obtained sight—the dead were brought to life. The reason for his having performed so many miracles was,

40. That the words of the

prophets might be fulfilled. He suffered death by the hands of his own countrymen.

41. After a variety of sufferings he gave up the ghost, and after three days he rose again.

42. And having arisen from the dead he remained forty days upon the earth, giving to the world various lessons of instruction.

43. And because he suffered, in his own person, the punishment due to sinners, he was called the Saviour of Sinners.

44. And now wherever the Lord is found, he grants salvation to all those who follow his word.

45. All those who in this world follow his doctrines, he conducts to the heavenly mansions free from care and trouble.

46. Hear, hear ye people, hear our words! This great book whose contents are happiness,

46. "Hear *our* words," and

47. Was originally in the Hebrew & Greek languages, and at length was translated by us.

47. "Translated by *us*"—here the Hindoo convert, the alleged author of this production, speaks as a missionary.

48. Not only we, but many

48. *We!* that is the new

other nations have translated this great *sastra*—this crest jewel.

49. The Portugueze, the French, the Dutch, the Germans, the Danes, the Armenians,

50. The Americans, the Africans, and the people of Asia possess it. It is to be found in every country, and in all the principal islands of the world.

51. Into all the above countries has this great *sastra* gone forth, as far as the country of the Malays. It has also been translated into the Hindu languages.

52. Those people who have obtained this great *sastra* have abandoned their former *sastras*, and have taken to this.

53. It is now translated into the Bengalee language, and is now printing:* you will shortly see i

54. At present if any of you are inclined and will come here, we will take the trouble to explain it to you.

missionary; for, we perceive he is become an European as well as a *Christian*.

51. "As far as the country of the Malays.

"Under the Tropic is our language spoke,
"And part of Flanders has receiv'd our yoke."

54. "*We* will explain it!" Here *we* are are again! Yet, after all this, the production is ascribed to a native, and the missionaries adopted it, finding it, doubtless, a good thing.

* It has been printed.

I do not question its having been written by a *ci-devant* Hindoo of the Christian school, but I see that the matter must first have been penned by the European missionaries, and then put by the native missionary into "catching Bengal verse;" but, no; *he* must be considered the author, because he *wrote it*. This, I believe, is what is commonly termed a jesuitical argument. As well might Paradise Lost be ascribed to Milton's daughter, who acted as amanuensis to her blind father!

When in Septemher, 1805, Messrs. Moore and Carey distributed four thousand pamphlets among the people of Dacca; when the magistrate alleged that the pamphlets had created great uneasiness among the people, and therefore insisted on their proceeding no further in distributing them, did the missionaries, in extenuation, tell the magistrate, that the pamphlets were the production of a Hindoo, and could thence contain nothing offensive to his countrymen?

This argument is obviously thus pressed upon us for the purpose of persuading us, that being written by a Hindoo, the tract could not of course contain offensive passages; that it did contain such, however, seems, at the expence of a contradiction, to be acknowledged by Mr. Fuller's friend: And that there must be offensive passages therein, we might safely venture to conclude, even without reading it, from the admitted fact, that the Governor-General of Bengal prohibited the missionaries from distributing tracts abusing the Hindoo religion, or permitting their people to distribute them. And as this was an *ex post facto* order, since which we hear of no more distributions, no further doubt, I presume, can remain upon the subject.

But if the tract contain nothing offensive, why do they so strenuously contend for its being the production of a Hindoo? The inference is obviously against them.

But if indeed, as Mr. Fuller asserts, "Nothing is said in the tract itself, about their books of philosophy (*Nyay*) nor are they said to be fit for the amusement of children *(balyanondo)* the Hindoos are not called barbarians *(mileetcho)* nor their shasters the shasters of barbarians *(mileetcho shastro.)*" If, I say, all this be true, and if the tract be so very innocent as they represent it, it was very unreasonable in the Dacca populace, to take offence at this harmless production—this "*Colombe sans fiel.*" It was equally unreasonable in the Dacca magistrate to listen to the idle and groundless displeasure of those idolaters, and to interpose his authority against a further distribution. But in *Sir George Barlow*, the Governor-General, who had been more than thirty years in India, who could have got a thousand people to interpret this pamphlet, and who could probably read it himself, and appreciate its merits, it was extremely unreasonable indeed, if not worse, that he should have assumed the authority of umpire, on this occasion, between the churches, and suppressed the zealous efforts of the mission-

aries, so very innocently exemplified in the circulation of this harmless pamphlet!

It was doubtless an unfortunate concession, in Mr. Fuller's friend, "that a poor converted Hindoo, on feeling the efficacy of the gospel, should have asserted the Hindoo tales to be abominable fables." This is what we familiarly term "letting the cat out of the bag." It took Mr. Fuller by surprise in the absent moments of his judgment, when indignant passion had taken the lead against the Vindicator of the Hindoos. Under this unhappy influence, the whole went to the press;—"the thing was done and past recalling;"—but when the paroxism yielded to the mild lenitive of time, and the sad fact, in all its glaring colours, stood before him,

Like one recovering from a trance,
When airy phantoms round him dance,
And in confusion pass away,
Like mists before the morning ray,
He looks about him with surprise,
And scarce believes his ears or eyes,
'Till reason re-assumes her reign,
And quells the tumult in his brain.

Then, indeed, might Mr. Fuller have exclaimed against his friend—

——————" To break thy faith,
" And turn a rebel to so good a master,
" Is an ingratitude unmatched on earth."

Whether he absolutely fainted on this occasion, fame does not report. He must however, have derived consolation from the candid avowal of his friend, that the same baleful star, in fiery and malign triplicity with Mars and Saturn, which appeared in the horizon of Mr. Fuller's course, had just then passed the meridian of his friend's intellects, and obscured the region of his discernment. Such an explanation must have satisfied Mr. Fuller; and the mutual influence of congenial sentiment, must have closer linked the ties of animosity thus cherished in their breasts against the Vindicator of the Hindoos. But—

——————" By the Gods
" They shall digest the venom of their spleen,
" Though it do split them; for, from this day forth,
" I'll use them for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
" When they are waspish."

APPENDIX A.

(See page 19.)

"THE *Veda, Upaveda, Vedanga, Purana, Dherma,* and *Dersana,* are the *six great Sastras,* in which all knowledge, divine and human, is supposed to be comprehended."

"The Sudras, or fourth class of Hindoos, are not permitted to study the six proper sastras before enumerated; but an ample field remains for them in the study of profane literature, comprised in a multitude of popular books, which *correspond with the several sastras,* and abound with beauties of every kind. All the tracts on medicine must, indeed, be studied by the *Vaidyas,* or those who are born physicians; and they have often more learning, with far less pride, than any of the

Brahmans. They are usually poets, grammarians, rhetoricians, moralists; and may be esteemed, in general, the most virtuous and amiable of the Hindoos. Instead of the Vedas, they study the *Rajaniti*, or *Instruction of Princes;* and instead of law, the *Niti-Sastra*, or general System of *Ethics*. Their *Sahitia*, or *Cavya Sastra*, consists of innumerable poems, written chiefly by the medical tribe, and supplying the place of the Purana's, since they contain all the stories of the *Ramayana*, *Bharata*, and *Bhagawata*. They have access to many treatises of Alancara, or Rhetorick, with a variety of works in modulated prose. To Upachyana, or Civil History, called *Als Rajatarangini;* to the *Nataca*, which answers to the *Gandharva Veda*, consisting of regular dramatic pieces in *Sanscrit* and *Pracrit*; besides which, they commonly get by heart, some entire dictionary and grammar."*

* Asiatic Researches, v. 1. p. 353.

I trust we shall, henceforth, hear no more of such idle notions, so commonly entertained, and now echoed by the "Christian Observer," that *"the Hindoo Scriptures are locked up from the bulk of the people;" and by Mr. Fuller, that, "let them possess what excellency they may, they are unknown to the people. The millions of Hindostan have no access to them."†

I cannot perceive that Mr. Fuller's friend has adopted this error. He is, doubtless, acquainted with vedas and sastras, and knows better: And it is a pity Mr. Fuller did not consult him on this point, before he ventured to speak so much at random. It would be hard, however, to make this gentleman accountable for Mr. Fuller's faults;—I would not heap *Pelion* upon *Ossa*—he has enough of his own to answer for.

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* C. O. p. 10. † F, p. 43.

APPENDIX B.

(See page .)

AS Plato, who visited Egypt about one hundred years after Pythagoras, or about four hundred before Christ, is said to have found the doctrine of a future state established in that country, we may venture to conclude that it had been communicated to the Egyptian priests by Pythagoras, on his return from India.

APPENDIX C.

(See page .)

AS a further proof of the high consideration attached to the Heetopades, I shall cite some passages from the author's introduction to that work.

"The Raja having thus meditated for a while, convened a council of Pandeets, whom he addressed in the following words:—Ye learned men, attend! Is there a man to be found, who shall, by precepts drawn from the Netee Sastras, be able to perfect the birth of my sons, who are yet uninformed, and constantly wandering in the paths of error."

"Of this assembly there was a great Pandeet, by name Veshnoo Sarma, well versed in the principles of all the Neetee

Sastras, who replied,—I will engage that in the space of six months, I will render thy sons well acquainted with the doctrines of the Neetee Sastras."*

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* Heetopa, p. 8 & 9.

APPENDIX D.

(See page .)

THE learned Paulinus, who seems to have been a proficient in Sanscrit learning, speaks of the Hindoos, in a manner very different from that of Mr. Fuller and his friend. In his voyage to the East Indies, he tells us—

1. "That the Indians believe that God created the world, though they do not agree in their ideas respecting the manner in which it was produced.

2. "That they are neither atheists nor materialists, because they believe in an exalted, self-existent Being, who produced every thing; and who is the Creator of the world.

3. "That they are, also, not Manichæns, as they acknowledge that the only true

God is exalted over, and independent of every other being. According to their opinion, he is eternal, the only one of his kind, and the sole Creator of the universe."*

Paulinus "one day having asked an ignorant Malabar pagan, how extensive the love of God was, according to his idea, he replied, "God is so great, that the serpent Vasughi, which surrounds the seven seas, and the fourteen worlds, would be too small, should he wish to employ it it on his finger instead of a ring." It is here seen that this heathen formed a very exalted conception of God, though he expressed himself in a figurative manner."†

To this we may add the Hindoo notion of the great serpent *Seshanaga*, with a thousand heads, on whom Vishnu is believed to repose, in the *Cheer Sumooder*,

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* P. p. 327. † P. 325.

or Sea of Milk; and, on one of whose heads alone, the earth is said to appear incumbent, in size like a grain of mustard seed.

For a description of this king of serpents, see Asiatic Researches, vol. i. page 249, where he is said to be sovereign of Patala, or the infernal regions.

APPENDIX E.

(See page 151.)

" LE Lingam est en grande veneration dans toute L'Inde; ses sectateurs sont tres nombreux. Ils portent toujours au col la figure du Lingam, ou bien, ils l'attachent au bras, renfermé dans un boete d'argent."

Which may be thus translated:

The Lingam is highly venerated all over India; its votaries are very numerous; they always wear the figure of the Lingam, enclosed in a silver box, either tied round the arm, or suspended from the neck.

This *Lingam* is a symbol of the great *energies of nature*, or *Seeva* and *Parvati* If I have ever seen such a box worn by

the Hindoos, which I do not recollect, one thing, at least, I am sure of, that I did not know what it meant. I have seen them wear ornaments on the neck or arm, which they called talismans; but my imagination was never so fertile as to connect with their appearance, any sentiment of indecency.

Of the Hindoo women, their manners, and their ornaments, I have not been unobservant; but I never saw, as this gentleman states, any other talisman on their faces, than what the goddess *Nature* had bestowed—excessive sweetness, and a magical charm of modesty and loveliness that oft "would take the prisoned soul, and lap it in Elysium."

some exceptions; chiefly at the shrine of the Sable Goddess, at *Binde Basny*; there Vishnu votaries have, in my presence, appeared with kids before the altar; the life, however, is not devoted; but the tip of the ear slightly cut till the blood appears; the votary then carries off the animal, and presents the sacred offering to the Brahmins.

My chief motive for introducing this detail, is to correct a notion which the reverend and learned author of the Indian Antiquities seems to have entertained, of a deadly and implacable hatred subsisting between the sects of Vishnu and Seeva:—"Insomuch, that when a follower of Vishnu meets one of the sect of Seeva, he thinks himself polluted, and flies to some rite of purification, for release from the foul stain."*

Wherever the Reverend Mr. Maurice

* Indian Antiquities, v. 5, p. 862.

may have received this information, I can with confidence assure him, that so far as the argument relates to the Hindoos of the Ganges, there is scarce a town, or village, or place of worship in Hindostan, where the fact cannot be disproved.

APPENDIX G.

(See page 190.)

THE Reverend Father Paulinus tells us, that *"the contempt which the Indians entertain for the Europeans, arises chiefly from the latter being so much addicted to drinking. For this reason also, they are called *Cianddler*, or *Nisher*; that is, contemptible, impure, unclean people."

The translator of the Missionary Tract, thus presented to the reader, having favored me with a literal translation of the two disputed passages, No. 15 and 20, I shall accordingly here exhibit them for the satisfaction of the public.

* Voyage to the East Indies, p. 286.

A literal Translation of Verses 15 & 20.

15

Tahay they, *nahika* are not, (do not contain) *tatwa* the principles, *prakrit uddhár*, of the original, or true, salvation. *Séy balyanand-sastra* they are children—amuse—sastras, *upakathá-nyay* by-tale philosophy.

20

Páché hereafter, *sabháy* together with brethren, *ghrina karaha* do you abominate, *mlécha-buli* the discourses of barbarians. *Mlécha sástra*, the sastra of barbarians, *náhé* is not, *tránér upáy* the means of salvation."

I shall now give Mr. Fernandez' translation of the original verses, as cited in Mr. Fuller's pamphlet.*

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*F. p. 35.

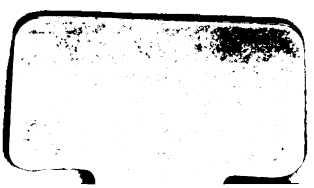
15

"True search for deliverance (from the wrath to come) there is not in them; children—enticing shastras, they are like fabulous tales."

20

"Lest you should hereafter call it the barbarians (shaster) and should hate it, (this is not the barbarians shaster, but a remedy for your salvation.)"

"WHO SHALL DECIDE, WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE?"

FINIS.

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